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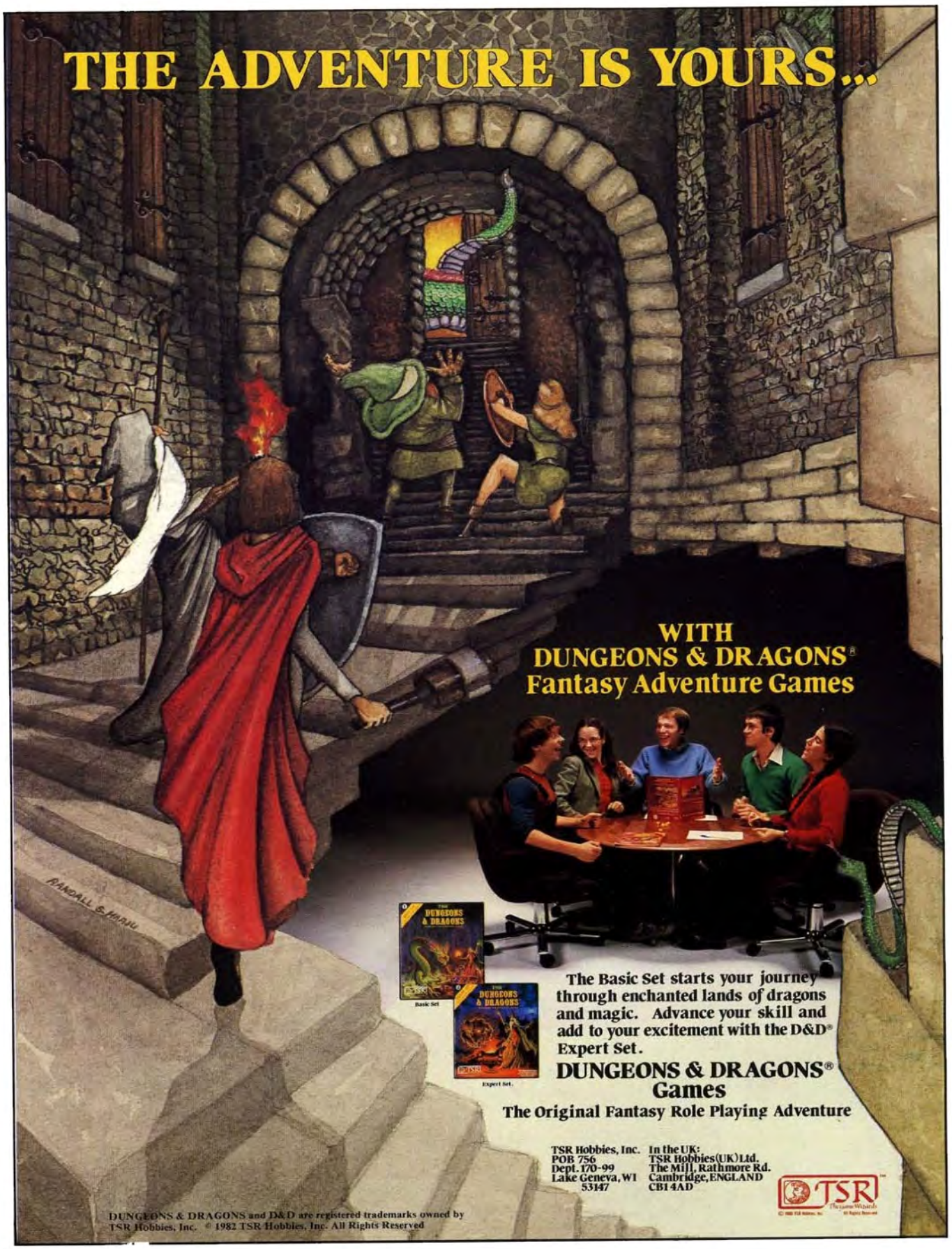

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IMAGINE™

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Gentle Reader,

You are now perusing the very first issue of the new magazine published by our sister company, TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. The same people who have brought you the remarkable and successful DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® fantasy role-playing game, and a host of other products as well, are now setting forth with their own creative efforts in earnest!

Because this venture is new, I wished to make some small contribution. It is a signal event, after all, and when this issue and the other early ones become collectors' items, there I'll be! In any event, I hope you will enjoy my article on 'The Barbarian' which I prepared recently and will appear next issue.

This magazine will principally cater to the thousands of role-playing game enthusiasts in the United Kingdom, and the rest of the world too. Its contents will stress new ideas, information, and new products. The Kindly Editor informs me that reviews will cover not only games but books, video and films as well. The aim is to provide you with every sort of information and idea you want to know about. I believe that this aim will be achieved.

I predict IMAGINE™ magazine will quickly become the leader in its field in the UK. I look forward to reading each new issue and hope to have the pleasure of being able to contribute from time to time. May you enjoy reading it and find that its contents increase your skills as well. The promised articles and mini-modules are certain to provide just what you have been looking for.

Regards,

E. Gary Gygax — *President, TSR Hobbies, Inc.*

Dear Reader,

The gaming hobby in the UK is growing at a spectacular rate. Whereas five years ago those who enjoyed gaming as a leisure activity could probably be counted in hundreds, today there must be many thousands. There is no doubt that the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game – which has been described as 'the fastest growing game in the Western world' – has been the main agent of this growth.

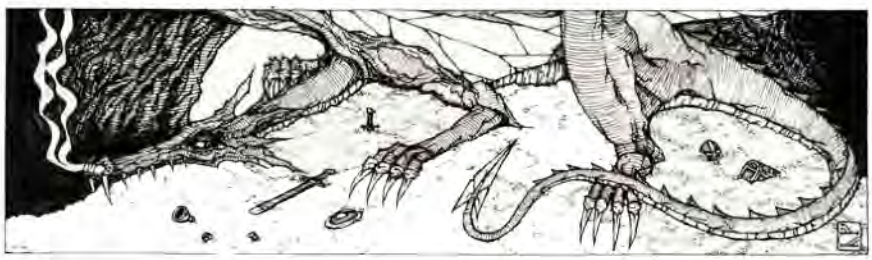
Technology, too, has played its part in this expansion. Five years ago the video game was rarely met outside the amusement arcade and the notion of a powerful computer with its potential for handling quite sophisticated games, falling within the family budget was unthinkable. The increasing popularity of these products runs parallel with a strident demand for more and more sophistication.

These games represent, in a way, the extremes of the spectrum. The electronic games rely absolutely on sophisticated engineering and in contrast the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game requires so little equipment that even the traditional game board is redundant.

IMAGINE magazine is for all the people at and in between these extremes and particularly for those involved in adventure gaming. Though, inevitably, there will be some concentration on the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS games as the most popular, this will be far from the only topic. First and foremost will be the principal message – gaming is fun.

I wish you every enjoyment of this magazine and of your gaming.

Don Turnbull — *for TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd.*



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THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

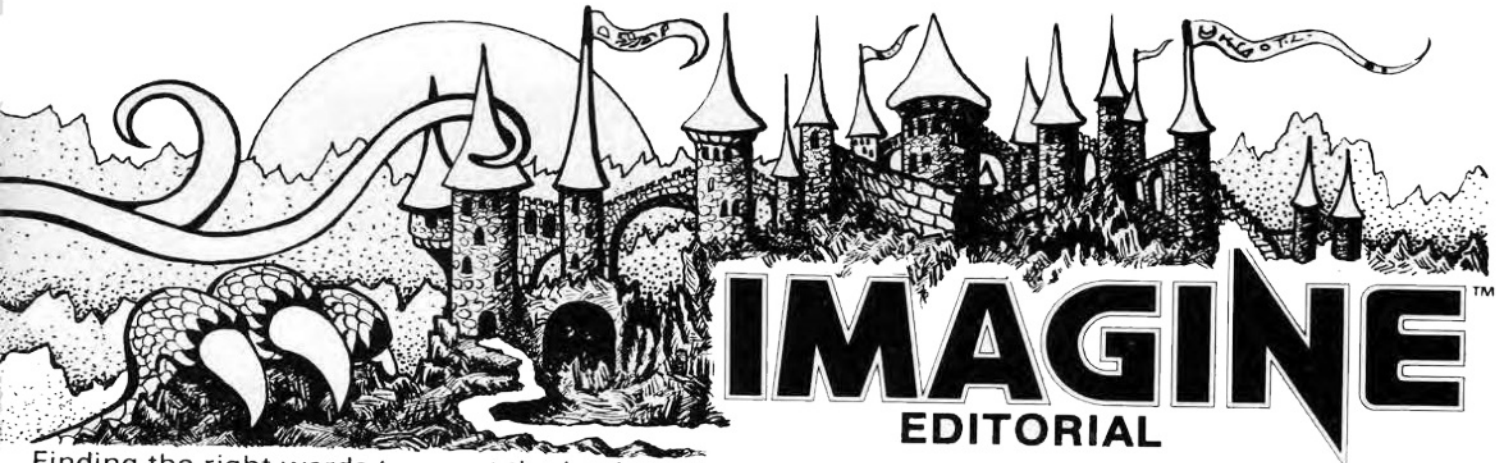
★ Three pages devoted to the new player — our regular commitment to the growth of our exciting hobby — including Roger Musson's tips on getting the most out of the D&D® game.

★ QB—161—01: ANTARES. Is this what role-playing will be like in the far future? While Cowin is adventuring in the dream-world of Antares, his wife is plotting his real-life death. This exciting Science Fantasy short story by John E. Black is complete in this issue.

★ The Beacon At Enon Tor. A new D&D mini-module set in a wizard's laboratory. An exciting adventure for 4—7 players.

★ Players Association News. PAN now lives within the pages of IMAGINE™ magazine, with its regular features and special offers for PA members, and, of course, Rubic of Moggedon.

★ Cartoon adventure — the quest for the Sword of Alabron. Our hapless adventurers set off to find the legendary Sword of Law.



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EDITORIAL

Finding the right words to say at the beginning of a new adventure like this is a difficult task. There are so many things to introduce, so many exciting ideas to describe, that we could fill a 48 page magazine like this with the editorial alone!

All of us here at IMAGINE™ magazine hope that we have hit the right blend. We have had scores of letters with ideas for the magazine sent to us from players over the last few months. Of course, some of the ideas were contradictory. We think the magazine will show we have listened and give players the advanced information and games ideas they ask for.

IMAGINE magazine is aimed at a wider audience than just existing players, however. There are millions of people still to be introduced to the world of role-playing. This magazine will try to make that introduction a little easier, with regular features aimed at the new player and the potential player.

Of course, both players and non-players alike will enjoy the short stories and the exciting artwork we will be bringing you. It is our intention to publish fiction of the highest quality from British and American authors, some famous, others not so famous. In this issue we introduce John E. Black, a young writer of considerable promise, who has seen his work appear in several periodicals of different types. His first novel has yet to be published.

This issue's front cover, by the brilliant artist, Rodney Matthews, is the first in a line-up of breathtaking artwork, representing the best in SF/Fantasy illustrations.

FORTHCOMING FEATURES

Every issue of IMAGINE magazine will be packed full of information and entertainment. Each will have a complete game insert, the Players Association News insert, three pages for beginners and a complete news and reviews service. In addition, look for these special features in the next few issues:

★ The Barbarian. A new, official AD&D™ character class from Gary Gygax. This is the most important addition to the AD&D game since the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome. *Appearing in issue 2, with a new mini-module to introduce the barbarian into your games world.*

★ CINDERELLA SWITCH, a short story by Anne McCaffrey, author of the Dragonriders of Pern series. Never before published in the UK. *Appearing in issue 4.*

★ LORE, LAY and LEGEND, by Carole Morris. A look at the myths behind the monsters and beings in the D&D game. *Appearing in issue 5.*

THE BEGINNERS' GUIDE

'Sword in hand, Brumhold kicked in the door. He nodded in satisfaction as it thudded into the wall. Across the room he faced six goblins, their evil eyes glowed red in the flickering torchlight. A half smile crossed his scarred face at the thought of action. By his side stood Jolinda, a warrior priestess, ready to deal death to the Spawn of Chaos.

Lemmy, a thief by trade, hung back by the door. Not for her the risk of death on the end of a goblin spear, there were easier ways to get rich. She tried to keep watch on both the corridor and the room and stood prepared for flight if anything went wrong.

Brumhold cursed as his sword swung harmlessly over the head of the ducking goblin. Another goblin reeled back, limbs flailing, under the impact of the cleric's mace.

With a cry of arcane words and mystical passes, Sarak unleashed his power. That instant the battle was over. The goblins' eyes gazed as they fell to the floor asleep.

Relieved by the outcome, Lemmy stepped towards the goblins only to be stopped halfway by Brumhold. A brief argument ensued, but Lemmy and Jolinda's cold logic won out over Brumhold's code of honour — the goblins were swiftly despatched. A search revealed a wooden chest, a few silver coins and a key. With a grin Lemmy placed the key in the lock....'

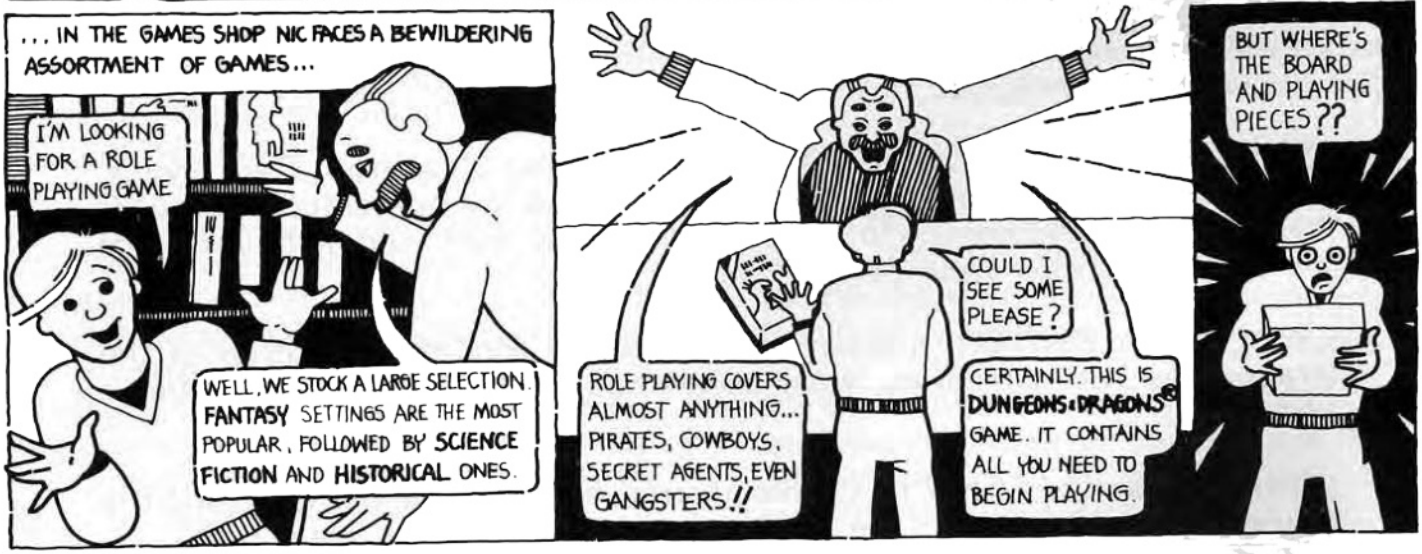
Fantasy literature abounds with such tales — but the deeds of brave warriors, devout clerics, arcane spell casters and cunning thieves are not restricted to the novel. The players of fantasy role-playing games can participate in many different adventures, experiencing the thrill of exploration and combat.

This adventure took place during such a game. Sue, the referee or Dungeon Master, has created the setting and runs the game acording to the rules. The other players each take the role of a fictional figure, like an actor taking on the part of a character in a play. Jon is playing a fighter; Anne, a cleric; Terry, a thief; and Alan, a magic user. In the dungeon, the players have just approached a large wooden door. Terry's thief listened at the door but failed to hear anything.

Jon — 'I'll kick in the door.'

Jon's fighter has a high strength increasing his chance of opening the door. Sue secretly rolls a dice and the throw is sufficient to open the door. She now quickly checks her room description to see what the room contains.

THE ADVENTURES OF NIC NOVICE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BUT WHERE'S THE BOARD AND PLAYING PIECES??

TO ROLE PLAYING GAMES

Sue — 'The door flies open revealing a small, roughly hewn room, dimly lit by a flickering torch in the north wall.'

Knowing the rules for surprise, she rolls two dice; neither side is surprised by the presence of the other.

Sue — 'Around the table are six small ugly human-like creatures with grey skin and red glowing eyes. They grab their weapons and move to attack you shouting as they come!'

Jon — 'Goblins! This should be easy. I'll attack the nearest one.'

Anne — 'I'll hit one with my mace.'

Terry — 'I'm going to watch the corridor to make sure nothing takes us from behind.'

Alan — 'I'm casting my **sleep** spell.'

Jon — 'Make sure you don't sleep us by mistake.'

Sue — 'Before you or the goblins can act I require an initiative throw. I'll roll for the goblins and one of you roll for your side, the highest score goes first.'

Anne — 'A six.'

Sue — 'Okay. You go first, the goblins only got a one. Fighters can attack and the magic user can cast his spell.'

Jon rolls a die and Sue checks it on a special combat table; the throw, however, is not high enough and Jon misses. Anne does better, scoring a hit, she now rolls a second die to see whether she kills the goblin or merely wounds it. Sue checks the damage rolled by Anne against the goblin's statistics and discovers that the goblin is killed instantly.

Sue — 'Jon, your goblin ducked beneath your sword, but Anne, you killed yours easily.'

Knowing how Alan's **sleep** spell works, Sue asks him to roll two dice and total the scores.

Alan — 'Five!'

Sue — 'Well done. The remaining goblins fall to the floor in a deep sleep.'

Terry — 'My thief will cut their throats and go through their pockets....'

Jon — Hang on! You can't do that. They're defence-less. It's not right!'

Terry — 'Look. They're evil and they're not going to sleep forever!'

Anne — 'Yeah, kill them. We can't leave them here. They may attack us later, and the world will be a better place without them anyway.'

Jon — 'Well, I don't know. I suppose we have to get rid of evil but I'd rather do it in a fair fight.'

Alan — 'I'll search the room for chests or anything else that's interesting.'

Sue — 'You find an iron bound chest under the table.'

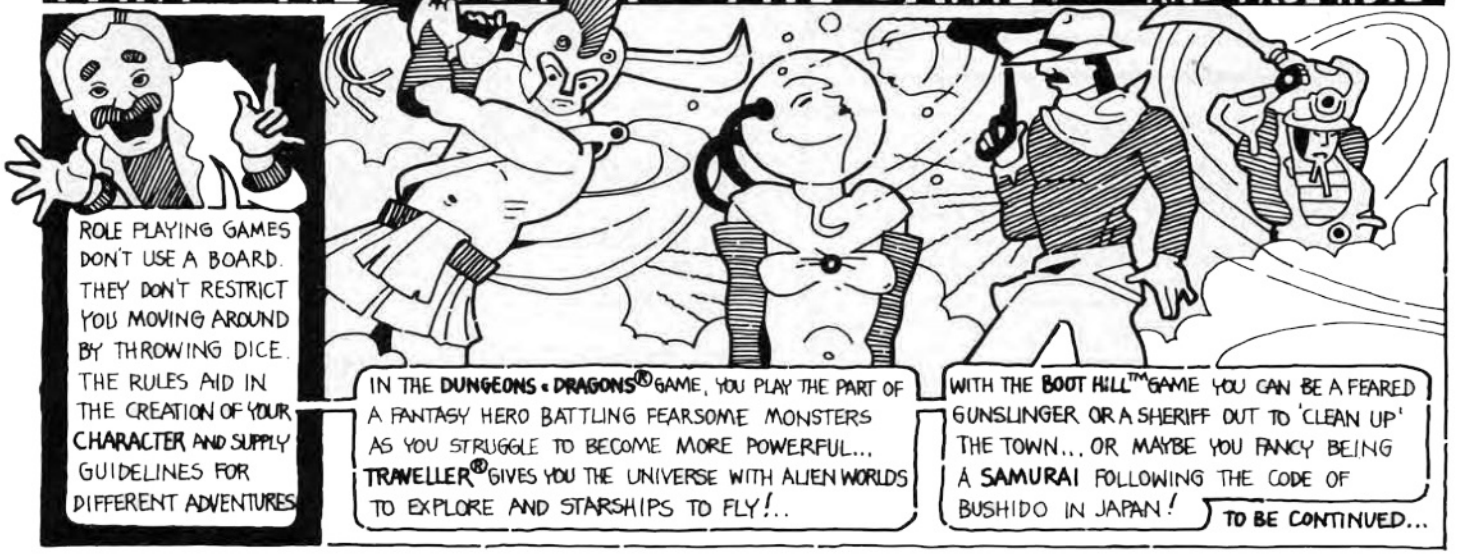
Terry — 'When I've killed the goblins I'll search them for a key.'

Sue — 'Okay. You find 8 silver pieces, a length of string and a key.'

Terry — 'I'll see if the key fits the lock on the chest. It may contain gold, gems, and even magic.'

PART ONE - BUYING THE GAME

BY JIM BAMBRA AND PAUL RUIZ


ROLE PLAYING GAMES DON'T USE A BOARD. THEY DON'T RESTRICT YOU MOVING AROUND BY THROWING DICE. THE RULES AID IN THE CREATION OF YOUR CHARACTER AND SUPPLY GUIDELINES FOR DIFFERENT ADVENTURES
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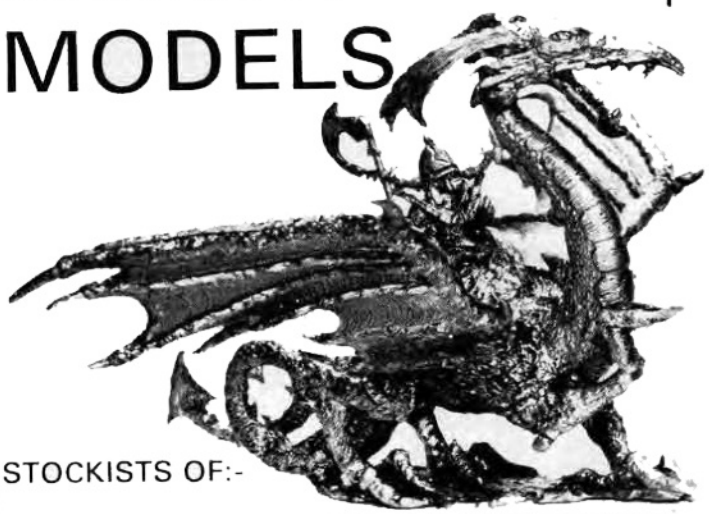

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A page for the not-so-experienced adventurer

by Roger Musson

I can still remember my earliest sight of the rules for the original D&D® game. Accustomed as I was to more conventional games I found it quite bewildering, and wondered what on earth it was all about.

No doubt there are plenty of other people who have had the same initial reaction. Indeed, many potential players may have been put off by their first, hostile impression, and never investigated the game further. Alternatively, they may have been put off by the sheer length of the rules. Imagine someone weaned on board games where the rules are written in large print on the inside of the box lid coming across the **Players Handbook**, the **Monster Manual** and the **Dungeon Masters Guide**, or even the 64-page **Basic D&D** rules booklet sitting side-by-side on the games-shop shelf. 'Do I have to read all that?' he asks in amazement, and passes on.

As it happens, the D&D game is a very easy game to play, even for the novice, who, at worst, need only worry about one spell at a time. Therefore, the answer to my hypothetical gamer's question, probably to his great suprise, is 'No!'

A game so different....

What kind of game is this, where you don't need to know all the rules? It's a role-playing game; a game so different from other types that a certain shift of attitude is necessary for the gamer to be able to appreciate it properly. Perhaps this is the obstacle that stands in the way of newcomers to the D&D game, or to any other role-playing game system. They fail to realise that they are dealing with more than just a new game. Role-playing games, (RPGs hereafter) are a new concept in games. Once this has been grasped, all becomes easy to understand.

The best way to become acquainted with the game is to join a group of experienced players and see the game demonstrated in practice. However, if you don't know anyone in your area who plays, this may not be practical. Therefore in the course of this column, I intend to try and outline some of the general principles of the D&D game to get you on the road.

A simple definition is difficult

Let me start off with the most general point of all: what is a role-playing game?

This is not such a simple issue as one might think. From some of the things I've read in games magazines, it is clear that there are people who don't really understand the term, and since a misunderstanding of the nature of RPGs is certainly not going to help one's understanding, it seems worthwhile to get things clear from the start. The definition that I have come across occasionally is that an RPG is one where each player takes the 'role' of a character and makes decisions for that character in the course of the game.

That is true, but it is not a complete definition. Using a definition like this, people have called games like Avalon Hill's *Magic Realm* and Philmar's *Sorceror's Cave* role-playing games. Fine games they are, but RPGs they are not. If this definition were correct, then the first role-playing game would be Cluedo; one player takes on the persona of Miss Scarlet, another that of Colonel Mustard and so on. Cluedo is no RPG for that, but a conventional board game.

A simple definition is very hard to find and it is nearly impossible to put down rigid boundaries that would separate all RPGs from all other games. Since it is true of RPGs, we can add to our previous definition to get closer to a true interpretation. The great distinction between RPGs and other games is that in a true RPG any action that is realistically open to the characters portrayed in the game, may be taken by the players. The only bounds governing the choice of action of the players are the bounds of feasibility; the bounds are **not** limited by the rules.

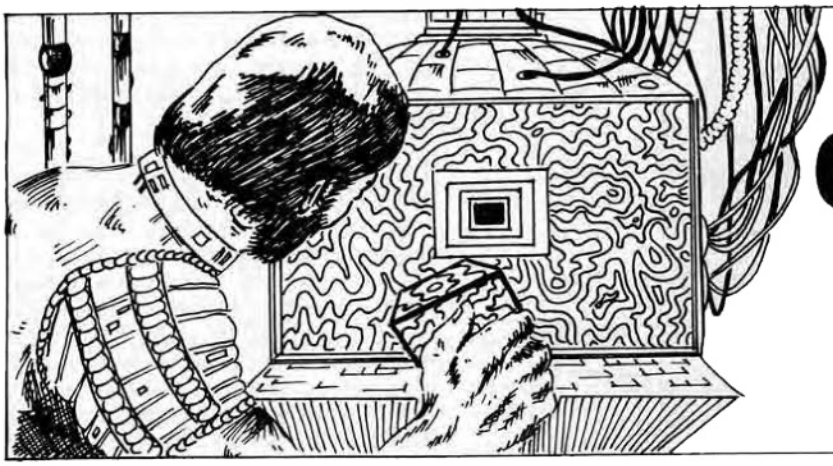
This is a considerable departure from normal game practice. In most games the rules are specifically there to tell you what actions you may take. In an RPG the players must consult their imaginations, not the rulebooks, for the best course of action. The rules are there to help resolve the results of players' actions where the result is not immediately obvious. A player may choose to slay a sleeping goblin; the result is obvious — dead goblin. On the other hand, if he fires an arrow at a fleeing goblin, it is harder to say off-hand what would happen, so the rules supply guidelines to help you. These are known as combat rules.

This is what gives an RPG its scope. If a player elects to do something in a non-RPG for which there is no rule, he simply can't. In an RPG, unless the action is obviously impossible, he can, and the referee must sort it out, making up guidelines on the spot if need be.

No restrictions

The implications of this are wider than might be apparent. A goblin in a boardgame is no more than a cardboard counter. You might be able to do two things, kill it or evade it. In a D&D game you can talk with it, trail it to its lair, capture it, sell it at a market — anything. Because you can do all these things, it means that the goblin must have something to say, there must be a lair, there must be a market. All these things imply more things in turn; the market is in a town, the town is in a country, the country has a ruler — all these things *may* be introduced into the game. Any other kind of game is deliberately restricted in scope to make it playable, but in an RPG there are no restrictions, and almost anything may turn up in the course of the game, either as a result of actions taken by the players, or a decision made by the referee.

If all this makes your mind boggle as much as seeing the rules in the first place did, there is one more thing I should add. In most RPGs the idea is not to win at the expense of other players; most often the party either wins or fails together. If this makes you cry 'What's the point then?', read Stirge Corner next month to find out all about playing and winning role-playing games.



QB-161-01:

by John E. Black

Just the faintest hiss of displaced air as the cube was accepted into the unit. Already Cowin began to feel better. In its place, the cube was nearly undetectable to the eye, blending perfectly with the rounded lines of the unit.

Although his head still ached, Cowin smiled and turned away, walking back to the couch. As the lights began to dim, he lay down to await the dream.

The beast was on the streets.

Qubar The Grey was celebrating Nastaq-ey-Bebec in his traditional manner. He had released his beast. Already, one victim lay drained, his face further paled by the mingled light of Kaih and Ayul.

Cowin entered the town carefully, from the Northern side, thereby invoking the resolution of ice; at midnight, thereby the core of silence; barefoot, to be at one with the sand beneath him. As he walked with long, slow, measured paces, he repeated a beneficial poem just loud enough for the walls to hear. He hoped they would remember his voice.

'There is no harm in shadows,
Haiq reveals empty sands.'

The low, white buildings of the town had hardly changed since his first visits. Here and there, a new dwelling perhaps. Through the pale, empty streets his pace never faltered until he reached the square. Dead in the centre lay the beast's first victim. Cowin shook his head, and it came to him to wonder why the beast had no given name.

'It is begun?' he asked aloud.

No voice answered, but the grateful walls sent him echoes of footfalls. He turned, unsheathing Gey-il-Waehoq, just in time to see the beast emerge from the East. Cowin allowed himself a tiny smile. If the beast hoped, by its approach, to invoke the speed of the East wind, it would soon know the folly of its ways. Cowin's birth was in lands to the East and the wind favoured its own.

Gey-il-Waehoq glinted as Cowin raised it in a salute to the East. The beast lumbered forward, kicking up sand at every heavy footfall. As it approached, Cowin could see why it had never been bested. It towered over him by two heads, skin plated like armour, fierce talons thrusting from its fingertips and eyes staring as if sightless. Even the resolution of ice might crack in the face of such a thing.

Still, it moved slowly. Cowin had time to recite a single inspirational verse.

'The shell more tightly sheathes the egg,
Still the fledgling will be free.'

Hearing his words, the beast slowed its charge and, stopping two manslengths away, began instead to circle round the mercenary. Then, unexpectedly, it spoke.

'Forever and forever and forever
Bubbles will rise and burst.'

To his astonishment, Cowin recognised the voice. It was Qubar. He remembered the rest of the poem, but if Qubar hoped such a dismissive allusion to Cowin's quest would give pause, he was mistaken. Allowing the beast to speak with his voice told Cowin more than was known before. Qubar and the beast were somehow a unity. Even now, Qubar would be watching through the eyes of the beast. The very act of entering into response suggested that Cowin's eggshell metaphor had struck home.

It towered over him by two heads, skin like armour, fierce talons thrusting from its fingertips...

Cowin danced lightly backwards, forcing the beast to break its circular motion and follow him. Having lost the momentum of the headlong rush, it must find a new avenue of attack.

'You have never faced enchanted metal before,' he taunted it, slicing the air with Gey-il-Waehoq. Suddenly, he lunged forward and brought the razor-edged blade down on the beast's arm. As he darted back he was delighted to see that the plated skin was marked. There was no blood and the beast seemed to feel no pain, but at least Gey-il-Waehoq could mark it. Maybe repeated blows to a small area of plating might break through, as do the beaks of fledgling birds, tirelessly hammering egg-shell walls until they give.

Once more the enchanted blade flashed forward, striking the same spot. The mark was now a groove. If he did not falter, if he could stay out of reach of the lumbering beast, there was a chance that he might yet earn his purse.

'Slender threads woven together
Topple giants and shackles as chains.'

He taunted the beast and, through it, Qubar. It came on wordlessly, baring needlesharp fangs. Now at the edge of the square, Cowin was forcing the beast into his chosen direction, North to South. Through careful planning, Cowin had ensured that, on this night, the compassing would favour him. There was no direction from which the beast might approach with vantage, least of all North, Cowin's chosen entry.

Lashing out once more he struck home again, but the beast was ready and caught him a glancing blow which had him somersaulting backwards, lucky to land on his feet. He knew then that the full force of a single blow would despatch him back to the East wind.

The groove was now a shallow cut. Still no blood.

Shaken by his close call, Cowin fell back. He needed a new strategy, but must still attack the weakened spot without endangering himself. They were now in double shadows between darkened, white-walled houses. Cowin darted into an alley, hoping it might lead him round behind the beast. He heard Qubar's voice throwing a poetic barb at his back.

'Long legged beasts may trumpet loud,
But the sound echoes in their bones.'

ANTARES

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Qubar was calling him a coward but, racing down the alley, Cowin cared not what Qubar called him. He turned at the far end of the house to face a cul-de-sac and a door bolted from within. Glancing back round the corner he saw the beast enter the alley. The only way out was up. Clambering onto a rain barrel, Cowin hauled himself onto the flat roof. This was better than he had hoped.

Quickly crossing the road, he dropped down into the alley behind the beast. Recalling later lines from the Ruark of Spley he shouted,

'Their bodies yield no meat,
Their ribs are sharp,
Their weaponry soft.'

Qubar would surely understand the allusion. As the beast turned, he had an unobstructed shot at the arm, bringing Gey-il-Waehoq down with tremendous force. He felt the plating give and the blade sank into something softer beneath. A blackish liquid spurted out.

Eager to bring the battle back into the moonlight, Cowin retreated to the street, heading for the square, pausing only to put a finger to Gey-il-Waehoq's edge and taste the blood of the beast.

His face contorted at a bitter taste he well recognised. 'Oil?' If the beast bled Foronde oil, it was surely more meatless than even the Ruark. Qubar's beast was mechanical. Suddenly many things became clear. Qubar's traditional celebration of Nastaq-ey-Bebec took on a significance more sinister than Cowin had at first imagined.

To his surprise, Cowin realised that there was no sand beneath his feet. He walked on stone, an element more favourable to Qubar The Grey. In his haste, earlier, he had not noticed that the shadowy streets were paved. The beast emerged from the alley and turned towards Cowin. As he took off once more for the relative security of the square, his foot erupted in pain. He had taken a stone splinter and, judging by his agony, it was pushing into an exposed nerve. He cursed Qubar's luck as he stumbled and fell to the ground, face down.

Behind him, the beast approached.

Deep inside the cubedream, Cowin did not hear the faint purring of the front door vibralok as Margit activated her codakey and slipped quietly into the hall.

She knew exactly where he would be, utterly cubed-out in the dimroom, but with the gun in her hand she checked every room in the house. She had to be sure they were alone.

Finally she opened the dimroom door. There he was, just another QB-junkie hooked in, as ever, to his beloved QB-161-01:Antares. She watched his face change with the moments of the dream. There surprise, now aggression, now a thin smile. From time to time he mumbled the odd phrase.

'Their bodies yield no meat,' he muttered enigmatically as Margit approached and sat beside him on the edge of the couch. There had been love, once, between them, she remembered fondly, but the cubes had drained them both, even though she rarely used them.

Gently, she touched his forehead, lightly stroking the small scar that remained where he had chosen to have his QB receiver foil implanted. She knew he wasn't the only QB-junkie, but he was the one who had mattered to her.

Total sensory input. Custom built dreams starring yourself. It was entertainment which few could resist if they had the credit.

Margit had resented losing him to a machine but she had submitted to it meekly at first, tolerated it until the night she had returned unexpectedly from the trip to her cousin in Borneo. She had thought she might surprise him by shuttling back, arriving a day early.

The big surprise had been hers. She'd found him asleep in the arms of a half-undressed, high heeled slut called Ellyn. Margit wished she had killed him then.

Or maybe she should have killed him when he explained the next day, over the callscreen, that he had started his affair with the slut because she reminded him of a girl he had encountered in a cubedream. Still, here he was now, deep in the dream, defenceless.

Margit rose and walked to the QB-unit. Checking the display, she saw that QB-161-01:Antares had another hour to run. Idly, putting off the moment, she pushed the indexer and watched the titles flip by.

She stopped it at QB-333-09:Pleasuredrome, and keyed up the cube. Seconds later it popped out of the dispenser. 'You bitch,' she said to it.

QB-333-09 said nothing. Pleasuredrome was an erotic cubedream, within whose satin and silk bedecked parameters Cowin had first met, and made total-sensory-input-love to, a girl who resembled Ellyn.

Margit raised QB-333-09 to her lips and bit into its fragile plastic surfaces. The cube came apart, spilling its pre-

Total sensory input. . . . . Custom built dreams starring yourself. It was entertainment which few could resisit if they had the credit.

integrated guts in all directions. Margit spat it onto the floor and wiped a trickle of lubricant from her chin.

A delicious idea nudged into her mind. With 57 minutes of Antares still to run, there was just enough time. She looked at her husband, lost on the other world.

'Enjoy it while you can, knucklehead,' she said, and left the room. Checking the druggit dispenser in the bathroom she saw that there was more than enough adrenyl for her purposes and settled down beside the callscreen to search for Ellyn's number.

From what she remembered of Cowin's frequent re-tellings of the Antares story, it would suit her purposes ideally. Timing would be the key.

Ignoring the pain, Cowin turned himself over. His eyes flashed from the beast to Geyil-Waehoq, fallen just out of reach.

The beast's arm streamed fluid onto the stone. Cowin tried to edge himself towards his sword but, slow as it was, the beast would be on him before he touched the blade. Even as he dragged himself along, he began reciting for himself the words of the Termination Waltz.

'Though we have cherished each other,
I will not yearn.
Though I have loved you,
I will say no farewell.
Time is wasting,
Time is wasting.'

A coarse laugh came from the beast, and renewed pain surged through Cowin as it trapped his foot under its scaly heel.

'Termination Waltz?' cackled Qubar. 'You were so confident moments ago, mercenary, but now how readily you consign yourself to your breezes. Do not expect to hear another verse.'

As he gloated, the beast's arm rose as if to strike but, to Cowin, it seemed to freeze in the night air. The blow seemed never to be coming. He recited another verse of the Waltz and felt the liquid draining from the beast onto his leg. It could not be. The beast was not moving. At that moment, Qubar too realised and his voice erupted through the beast's unmoving lips in a string of obscenities, many of which even Cowin found unfamiliar. One, which seemed particularly out of place, was 'Enjoy it while you can, knucklehead.' The voice did not even seem to be Qubar's, although Cowin was sure he recognised it.

Slowly it became clear to Cowin that he had severed more than a simple lubricant point under the beast's skin. It must be powered by pressurised oils and he had cut into the lines. No pressure, no power.

He sat up and pushed hard at the beast's middle. It was already off-balance, with one foot on Cowin, and it toppled backwards more easily than he had anticipated. Composing himself, drawing upon the resolution of ice, he plucked the sliver of stone from his foot. At once the pain abated as the pressure came off the nerve.

A light flickered in a nearby window where all before was dark. 'You can come out now,' shouted Cowin. 'The beast is dead and Qubar will soon follow it.'

First, one anxious face peered from the window. Another risked a look round a door, opened by a crack. Moments later the street was full of the curious, the joyful and the morbid. Nastaq-ey-Bebec would now be celebrated as it had been before Qubar's reign.

'The worm would rather starve
Than rise to seek the living.'

Cowin berated the townspeople, and they did not answer back. They knew he was right. His wound was dressed and caused him little pain. The voice of Qubar the Grey still poured out of the fallen machine until Cowin returned to its side and whispered a brief line.

'The Verak also bleeds.....'

Qubar's voice died away.

To Margit's annoyance, she found Ellyn's number simply by keying her first name into her husband's indextel. For a moment she wondered how to present herself to Ellyn. She had to be convincing. Moments later, when the screen lit up, Ellyn was confronted by a sobbing, hysterical Margit.

Understandably suprised to find her lover's wife on her callscreen, she suspiciously demanded, 'What do you want from me?'

'Maybe I shouldn't have called you,' burbled Margit, almost convincing herself. 'Heaven knows, I don't really know you, but he's dying and I don't know anybody else who cared much about him. He was such a lonely man.....'

'Dying? What are you talking about? I spent last night with him. I wouldn't call him a young buck, but he's not dying. We had this big argument before I left this morning and.....'

Margit's heart leapt. It could not be better. She tried to keep the glee from her eyes as she said, 'That must be it then. I came back to collect some of my things, and I found him in the dimroom with an empty dozpak of adrenyl. He won't come round, but he keeps speaking your name over and over. You must realise how difficult it is for me to call you and admit this, but,' her voice quivered and tears streamed down her cheeks, 'he must really love you.'

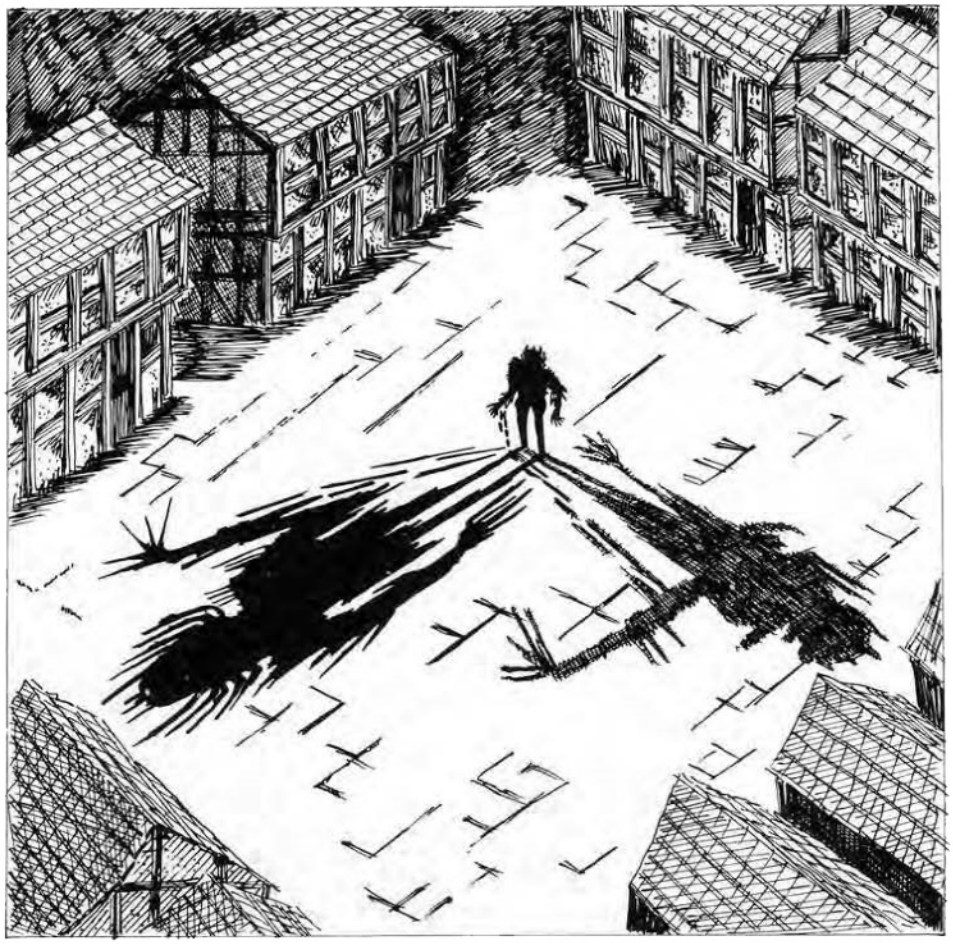
In a stroke of inspiration, Margit looked away off-screen as if hearing a noise. 'That must be the doctor. I'll have to go. Can't you come over?'

'I don't know if I should. I mean.....'

'Well, if he really means so little to you.' She reached her hand forward as if to cut the communication.

'No, wait,' shouted Ellyn.

When the screen faded, Margit laughed all the way to the druggit and keyed up a dozpak of adrenyl. Assuming Ellyn was already on her way, she would be inserting her ident in the front door securidom within half an hour. By that time, Cowin had to be up on his feet and ready for anything.



But first, the axe.

'Half now,' insisted Cowin.

'But Qubar.....' protested the elder.

'His beast is dead. He will follow. If you prefer, I can leave now and allow you to face Qubar's wrath in the dawn.'

The elder capitulated. 'Agreed then one half.' He gestured to a djebal in the shadows. It left the room.

'Now,' continued Cowin, 'tell me this..... have there been many slayings in the town? Disappearances, unusual murders?'

The old man nodded again. 'All of my life. Even before Qubar ruled, in his father's day, may the Westerlies remember him with affection. Even then, the young ones were slain or taken in the night. Those we found were always drained.'

'Of blood?'

The old man's face said yes, but his attention was distracted as the djebal returned with an animal-skin bag and threw it, clattering, to the table top. Cowin pulled the drawstring and plunged his hand inside, pulling out a cascade of cut gemstones.

'Excellent.' Cowin smiled and pushed the bag back towards the old man. 'Keep them for me.'

'But I thought you.....'

'I wished to be sure the purse existed. This town no longer has the prosperous air I recall from my youth.'

'Under Qubar, we are poor. If we might return to his father's day, things would be different. Before you lies half our total wealth. Everything we have will be yours.'

Cowin was unmoved, but made the necessary sympathetic noises before offering a poem.

'The eyes of the wind see, but cannot count.
The grains of sand are innumerable,
But still scatter at the wind's whim.'

The elder bowed his head and responded, with a trace of petulance.

'Great wealth in time is like great men.
It lies but cannot stand up.'

Cowin laughed aloud. 'Superstition sits better than philosophy in a mercenary head, old father. Let me worship as I choose and take my chance on the winds. I will not regret the passing of this, but I will enjoy the flesh while I have it.' He rose and walked to the door of the house. 'I will return before dawn. Have **all** my purse ready.'

Both moons were still visible but Cowin saw Kaih, the smaller moon, was already low on the horizon. It cast a long shadow ahead

of him as he approached Qubar's Court. His talk with the elder and his discovery that the beast was mechanical convinced him that he would find Qubar within. If his guesses were right, Qubar could not leave the protective walls of his court during Nastaq-ey-Bebec.

If Cowin could not trap him within the Court before Kaih sank below the far hills, it would be too late. The court was unguarded but pale figures roamed within. Creatures who existed to do Qubar's bidding. They took no notice of Cowin as he moved among them.

It was widely held that in bygone days, when townspeople still visited Court, those who spoke against Qubar's depravities were often those who vanished in the night. In recent years, no-one came to Court.

Cowin made his way across the courtyard to the Long Tekcun and pushed open the great doors. Memories flooded back of a time before when, in the service of Qubar's father, the Court had been a lively place where art and music mingled harmoniously with the business of government. Now it seemed a husk, a hollow place.

The huge doors closed behind him and he found his way by candlelight to the inner hall, where he was certain Qubar would be expecting him. A poem greeted his entrance.

'The dayfly and the man share one oasis,
The stars do not thirst.'

Cowin understood. Qubar was trying to show his superiority, but Cowin responded with an older verse.

'The fleeting creatures of the sand
Are yet more constant than stars
Which fade with every sunrise.'

Qubar took a deep breath and cast aside all pretence at allusion. 'You cannot kill me. You must know I will rise again.'

Cowin ignored the remark 'Even as a young man, your appearance was startling. I should have known it then. I just don't understand why they kept you, why they protected you.'

'A father cannot deny his own offspring.'

'His own starless bastard, surely. You were conceived in the void. You were never the child of his queen. Why did she take you in?'

Qubar grinned, showing brown, stained teeth. 'I was helpless, tiny, when he brought me back from between the stars. His kind had wiped out my race, but he took pity on me. Thought he could raise me in his ways. His queen even suckled me with her own brat, my long-dead brother. Her milk ran red for me. She loved it, poor bitch. In time we shared her, my father and I. He had her affections, I had her blood. Her bed was ever busy.'

As Qubar gloated, Cowin inched nearer. There was just one hope. He had to take him unawares, render him senseless for a few moments. It would be enough. 'And your beast. Who built your beast?'

'My own hand,' he said proudly.

'It is gone now. You must thirst tonight. No blood from your beast. How much would it gather for you?'

'Enough,' grated Qubar, 'but what is that to you? You know my nature. You must know my needs.'

'Yes, but why don't you get your own blood? You usually do. Why stay in the Long Tekcun on such a fine night as Nastaq-ey-Bebec? It's not just the vicarious thrill of killing, draining and watching from afar, is it?'

Cowin could see that his words were getting through to Qubar. The creature realised that Cowin knew his weakness. He could not venture into the light of the two moons. He was a creature of the void, where only starlight penetrated. Being suckled by a woman of this world had given him some protection against Ayul, the common moon, but the mingled light of both moons was too much.

His face told Cowin everything he wanted to know. 'You needed that beast for Nastaq-ey-Bebec,' said Cowin, unsheathing his

blade and setting one foot upon the bottom step of a flight that led up to Qubar's throne.

'I'm going to kill you — forever.'

With an ear splitting shriek and speed that amazed Cowin, the creature launched itself through the air, ploughing into him before he had time to think. As he fell, it was sinking bony fingers into his neck.

Margit came up from the garage carrying the rusty axe Cowin had used to chop firewood when they were first married. She remembered those days as if in another life. In the kitchen she downed a double scotch before pouring a large glass of water for Cowin. Passing the windowall in the front room she looked out anxiously in case Ellyn might arrive too soon, but there was no sign.

She hurried into the dimroom and laid the axe and the glass of water beside the QB-unit. She almost felt sorry for him, thinking how he would feel when he recovered his senses. Glancing at the display she saw that it was time to feed him his pills. She opened the dozpak and shook out the contents. Laying them beside the couch she lifted him gently into a sitting position.

'The vicarious thrill of killing.....' mumbled Cowin, deep in the dream. For a moment Margit was horrified, but quickly realised he was talking in his sleep. She put one pill to his lips and raised the glass. Unable to do anything but comply, Cowin swallowed pill after pill until the dozen were gone. In a few minutes his mind would be buzzing inside the dream.

Margit helped him up, walked him round the room and began to suit his movements to the action of the dream. As he said, 'I'm going to kill you — forever.' Margit slipped the axe into his hand. The securidom in the hall announced Ellyn's arrival and clearance. A quick glance at the display told Margit that she was right on cue.

Closing his fingers tight round the axe shaft, Margit lead him once more round the room. He was becoming animated, moving of his own accord. Eyes wide open, the pulse in his wrist hammering, the dream still held him. Praying that her luck and timing would continue, Margit left him searching the dimroom for Qubar and hurried to the front door.

'Ellyn? I'm sorry, I hardly recognised you,' she almost said, "with your clothes on" but bit her lip in favour of, 'We never really met properly.'

The younger woman accepted her handshake with obvious suprise. 'How is he?' she asked, clearly concerned.

'Much worse.' Margit's performance was perfect, her face seeming to drop with every word. 'I don't want it to be too much of a shock to you, but if you go right through, you'll understand why I called you.'

'Where is he?' asked Ellyn, unzipping her coat, revealing a low cut white dress which Margit thought hardly in keeping with a visit to a sickbed.

'Through there.' She pointed to the door.

'Isn't that the dimroom?'

'Yes. I thought a cube might relax him.' She ushered Ellyn towards the door. 'Sorry it's so dark. Better that way for him.'

'Not the Antares cube?' asked Ellyn.

Margit smiled. 'However did you guess?'

'It was always his favourite.' As Ellyn stepped through the door, Margit helped her along with a firm push from behind. Ellyn screamed. Margit pulled the door shut and locked it.

An irreverent line of poetry popped into her head. 'In Xanadu did Khubla Cowin a stately Pleasuredrome decree.....' She laughed and settled down beside the callscreen.

Qubar and Cowin writhed together on the floor of the inner hall, toppling chairs and tables as they struggled. Qubar's strength was greater than Cowin's, and the mercenary knew he could take his adversary only by suprise.

Rolling over, they were momentarily separated when Qubar tumbled out of sight behind a fallen table. Cowin took advantage of the break to stumble to the shuttered windows. His fingers found the shutter clasp and jerked it free. Qubar's fist struck the back of his neck even as he pulled the shutters wide.

There was an agonised scream and, though dazed from the blow, Cowin turned to see Qubar, hands before his face, jerking backwards out of the double moonlight. The flesh of his hands was flaking, even from the brief exposure.

The creature staggered back, twisted round and hurried for the dark of the corridor outside. Guessing which way his foe would run, Cowin raced for the opposite door and tore, helter skelter, along a parallel corridor. In his agonised state, Qubar would be confused, disorientated. Cowin hoped he would reach the cellar entrance first.

He could hear Qubar's shuffling steps approach as he secreted himself in shadows beside the cellar door. He raised his blade to strike, and as Qubar passed by, whimpering in pain, Cowin brought the handle down on his skull. As Qubar fell, Cowin lunged out with Gey-il-Waehoq, running the body through again and again.

He breathed a long sigh as he withdrew the sword for the last time, but he knew it was not over. Qubar, scarred though he was by the light, might still rise again.

Cowin took the bloodsoaked body in his arms and carried it quickly along the corridor. A single kick burst open the doors into the courtyard and Cowin stepped through into the last light of both moons. In his arms, Qubar began to crumble.

Margit was keying the police number on the callscreen when the door of the dimroom was kicked open from within.

His eyes bulging, his expression triumphant, Cowin stepped through. In his arms, the mutilated body of Ellyn hung limp, her white dress vividly highlighting the blood that splashed from numerous wounds.

Without a look at Margit, Cowin rushed out and took his mistress out into the light of the front garden.

When the operator's face flashed onto the screen, Margit said, 'Get a car here fast. I think my husband has just killed somebody.'

John E. Black (31) is a writer/journalist, born in Scotland, living in London. He has written regularly for the Sunday Times, Observer, the Listener, Over 21 and others. His first novel awaits publication, his second is in progress.

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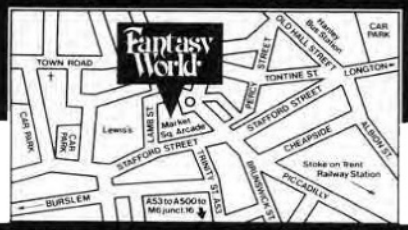

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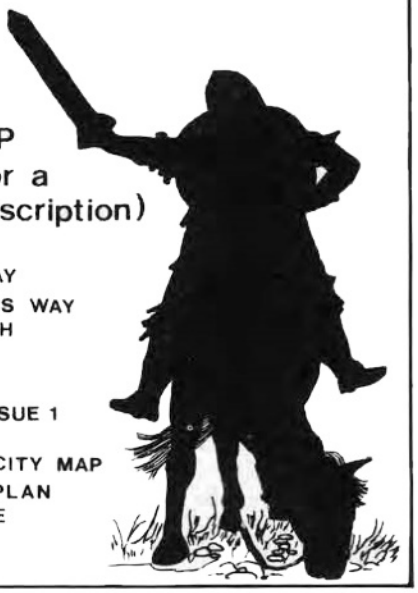

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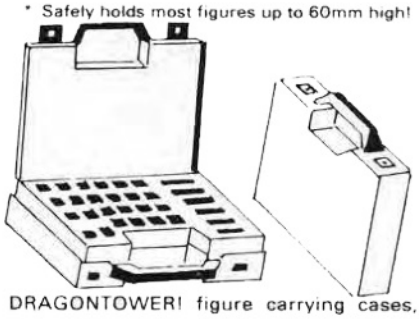

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FANTASY GAMES UNLIMITED

Fantasy Games Unlimited have achieved the unachieveable with a 'role-playing board game' called **STAR EXPLORER**. Just what role you can play we leave to you to discover, but the ship on the box has a rather familiar look to it, though the guy with the pointy ears looked a bit green. You are the gallant starship captain battling alien empires and pirates during the exploration of the galaxy. Boxed, £9.95, it looks easy enough to learn and it can be played just as well solo, or so we're told. Our eager reviewers will be boldly reporting in one of the next two issues of this magazine.

Also to be reviewed in this magazine in the near future is another FGU product, a new adventure and campaign starter for the **AFTERMATH** game entitled **OPERATION MORPHEUS**. It's set in Australia but sensitive souls can transfer the action elsewhere. It will cost £4.95 in the shops.

NEWS FROM OUT WEST

Predicting the arrival of new games and modules from the USA is never easy, since our production cycle makes most news cold before it reaches the newstand. The latest news from TSR Inc. is based on known facts at the end of January, so don't go upsetting your local games shop with demands he can't fill...

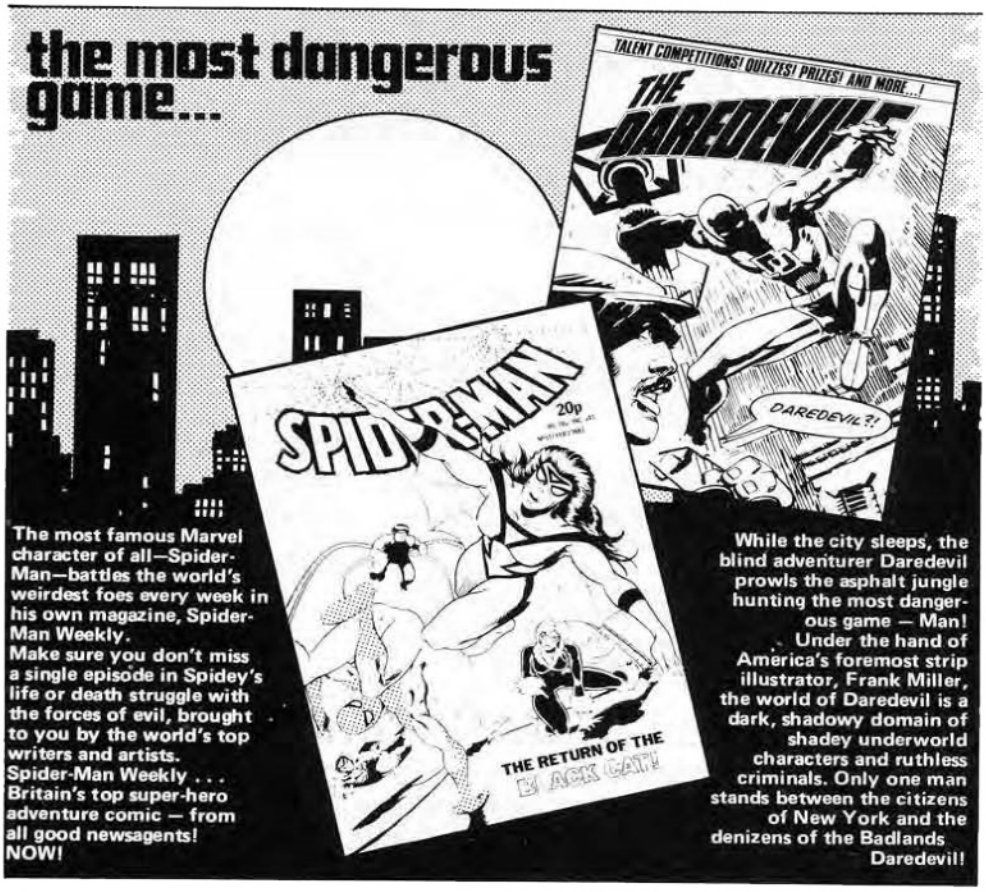
The last module to arrive on these shores was I2 **'TOMB OF THE LIZARD KING'**. The **STARFRONTIERS™** module, SF2, **'STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS'** should arrive next. UK1, **'BEYOND THE CRYSTAL CAVE'** looks as if it will not arrive as soon as hoped, but might follow these two over. Then, not long after, M1 **'BLIZZARD PASS'**, I3 **'PHARAOH'**, and I4 **'OASIS OF THE WHITE PALM'** should arrive. Details of other releases will follow shortly.

LOOSE CHITS

Speaking of waking up after the holocaust to find the world full of ressurected sleepers, a new **MORROW PROJECT** scenario will be out in the UK soon, courtesy of Flying Buffalo. In the US Timeline called it DOMACLES, but we will know it as **BRIDGETAKERS**. This game will be reviewed soon as well.

What with the **GAMMA WORLD™** game on top of these, makes you wonder if it would be worth having a nuclear war after all...

Some survivors of WW3 might find it interesting to relive the less complex wars of yore — like WW2. FASA's **BEHIND ENEMY LINES** is an example of the way a traditional wargame subject can now be given RPG treatment. It's mainly a combat game, but might present a challenge even to experienced role-players. It costs £16.95 for the boxed game, and **GUNS OF NAVARONE**, the first adventure is a £4.95 booklet. We hear that **BRITISH COMMANDOES** will be the next title.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SPI COME IN FROM THE COLD ..... PRODUCTS

Boardgamers will be happy to see SPI products finding their way to the UK once again. Most gamers already know that TSR Inc. acquired the assets of SPI in the USA early in 1982. In the UK this meant that from 16th February 1983, the right to supply SPI goods here was transferred from Simpubs to TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. The SPI range will be available through retail outlets or direct from TSR in Cambridge.

SPI's range has undergone some reduction but there will be new products; 2 new SPI games out this year for example, retaining the style and content of previous releases. Established favourites will be kept in print. TSR (UK) intends to carry the complete range of titles maintained by the parent company in the US.

Of existing games, the list on the right shows those expected to be on sale here at the end of March. There may still be problems with supply for a while; we understand that **UNIVERSE** may not be available, possibly until 1984, and that there could be problems with **DRAGONQUEST** material once stocks run out.

Lastly, **STRATEGY & TACTICS** — edited by early S&T luminary Roger Moore — and **ARES** will continue to be published bi-monthly on alternate months. Likely contents are not known to us at present, although most issues should have a game included. **MOVES** will not continue.

Subscriptions to the magazines will be available through TSR at a later date.

These games should be in the shops by the time you read these words.

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The above prices were correct at the time of going to press. TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. do not undertake that they will still be applicable at the time of publication.

IMAGINE™ magazine thanks Doug Cowie for his assistance with these items.

CAR WARS ROLL ON

Steve Jackson Games are developing **CAR WARS** still further. The role-playing aspect is being emphasised, giving players a chance to be real psychopaths instead of rooting around dungeons.

New out is **SUNDAY DRIVERS**, a CW role-playing supplement about bike gangs and vigilantes. The **CW EXPANSION SET 1** expands the mayhem parameters. In **SPACE GAMER** there have been several scenarios, including **WESTWAY**, set in London. Still to come is **AUTODUEL QUARTERLY** and **TRUCK STOP**, which combines Bert Reynolds macho heroics with automotive slaughter. Sure to be a winner with all mums and dads.

Also from SJG we can expect **BATTLESUIT**, based on power armoured infantry from **OGRE**, but not compatible. Then there are the **ILLUMINATI EXPANSION KITS 1** and **2**, the only planned additions to this mild game of world domination. Lastly, there will be **NECROMANCER**, a fantasy tactical game of combat between two wizards, probably the same game that appeared in **SPACE GAMER** a few issues back.

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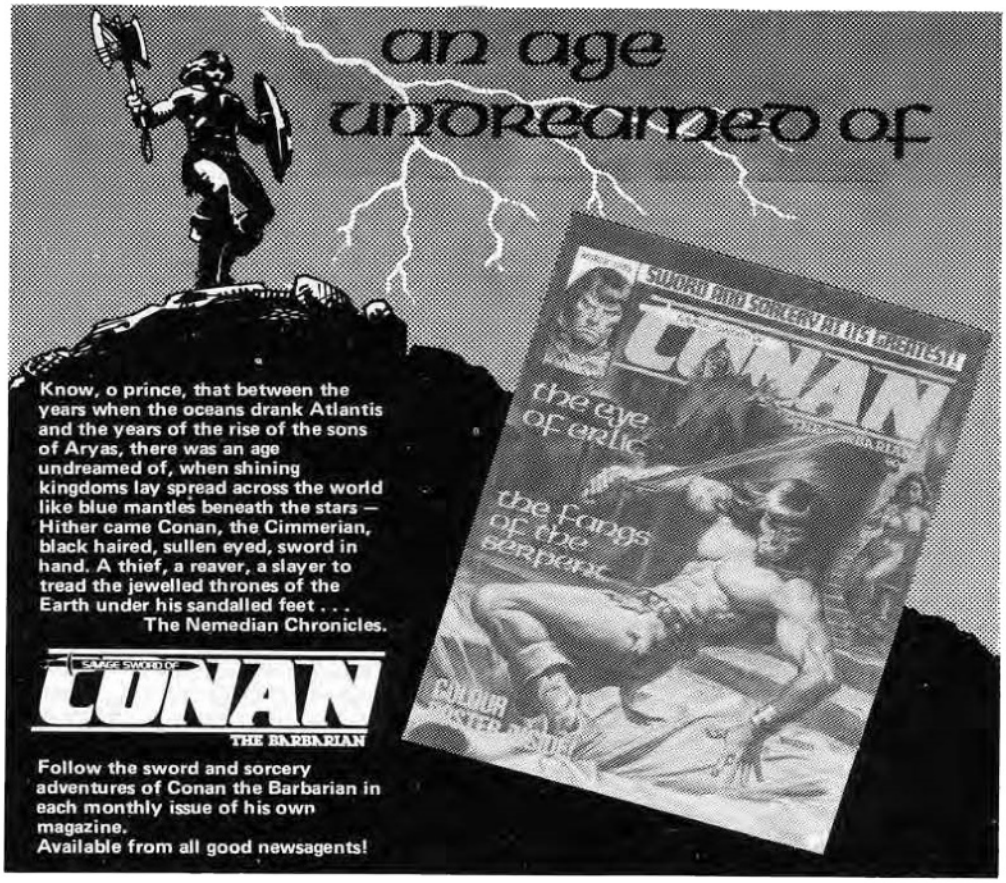
an age undreamed of
Know, o prince, that between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the years of the rise of the sons of Aryas, there was an age undreamed of, when shining kingdoms lay spread across the world like blue mantles beneath the stars — Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black haired, sullen eyed, sword in hand. A thief, a reaver, a slayer to tread the jewelled thrones of the Earth under his sandalled feet . . .
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Book Review

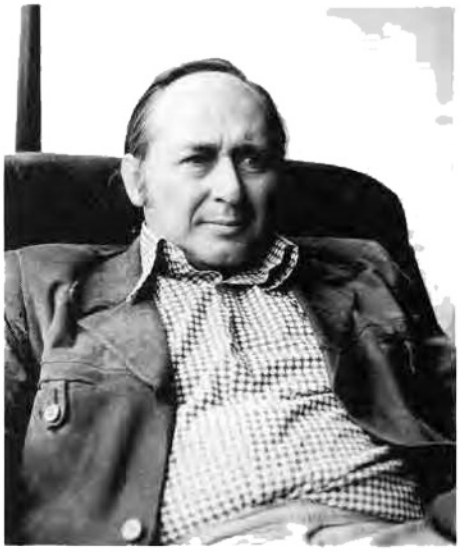
Dave Pringle, editor of **Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction**, looks at recent releases in the world of adventure fiction and some interesting non-fiction.

J. G. Ballard is the Great Original of British science fiction, a writer as unique and charismatic in his own way as Robert A. Heinlein is in his. Needless to say, he does not resemble Heinlein in the least, but both are true SF writers according to their very different conceptions of the genre. It is writers such as Heinlein and Ballard who lead; others follow. The direction in which Ballard leads is towards psychology and surrealism — the terrain which over 20 years ago he dubbed 'inner space'. In his latest collection, **Myths of the Near Future** (Cape, £6.95), he gives us ten vividly ironic stories, all narrated in a rich angular style, a tone of voice which is unmistakably Ballardian.

The title story is set in an empty Florida, a couple of decades into the future. The few remaining people are suffering from a disease of their time sense; simultaneously, they are able to see the past and future identities of any person, animal or object. This gives Ballard the opportunity for some wonderful descriptive writing. He has always been a master of phantasmagorical landscapes — forests, deserts, technological wastelands — and here we find some glowing examples. Also notable in this volume are the stories 'Having A Wonderful Time', a brief and punchy piece about a sinister solution to the unemployment problem; 'The Smile', about a man who buys himself a wife in a junk shop; and 'The Intensive Care Unit', about a world where people communicate *only* through video channels and flesh-to-flesh contact is outlawed. Ballard has a talent for striking the contempory nerve. Although made over into SF, the situations in this book are all too real. It is our world he is describing.

In Viriconium, by M. John Harrison (Gollancz, £6.95) is a fantasy novel of a rare kind. It will not appeal to the average sword-and-sorcery reader, because the emphasis is heavily on character rather than action. True, there is a leather-clad dwarf who occasionally wields a horrid skewer, but for the most part this is a novel of conversation, mood and nuance. Ashlyme, the portrait painter, attempts to rescue a fellow artist from the plague zone of a dying Viriconium. He is hampered by the Barley Brothers, the comically grotesque 'gods' of the city who also happen to be the inventors of Chinese takeaways, donkey jackets and wellington boots. Ashlyme aspires to beauty; the failing city continually deflates his hopes; and yet a kind of beauty is achieved in the end. Above all there is beauty in the writing. Viriconium is brilliantly described, in language of an intensity rarely equalled in modern writing. Harrison has a wickedly acute eye for human folly; every so often this novel makes you wince as though you have just caught sight of yourself in an unfriendly mirror.

Another elegant fantasist, Gene Wolfe, has recently scored great critical success with his 'Book of the New Sun' sequence of novels. Thanks to that success, his

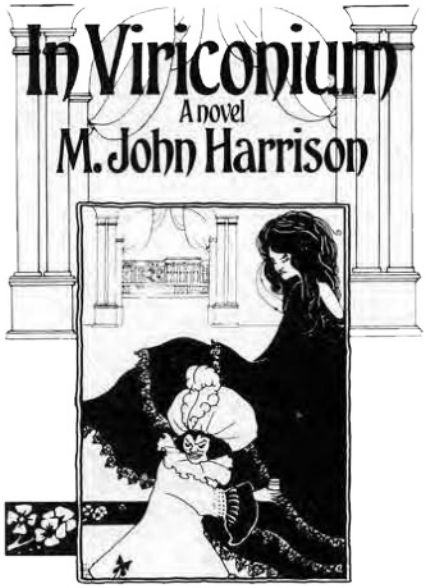


J. G. Ballard *Copyright: Fay Godwin*

earlier **The Fifth Head of Cerberus** (Arrow, £1.50) has just been reissued. A collection of three inter-related novelettes set in an alien solar system, it makes a deeply imaginative and moving book.

The Science in Science Fiction, edited by Peter Nicholls (Michael Joseph, £9.95), is an excellent and timely work of non-fiction. As more and more SF appears to be turning its back on science, this book reminds us how a realistic speculative underpinning has been essential to the genre in the past. There are twelve beautifully illustrated chapters on such subjects as Space Flight, Energy, Aliens, Time Travel and Intelligent Machines. Much of the book has been written by David Langford and Brian Stableford, both good SF writers with a firm grounding in science (physics and biology, respectively). These fellows know whereof they write. I hope every would-be SF writer in the land reads this book and comes to the realisation that raw imagination and an ability with words are not enough; a modicum of *knowledge* has always been necessary to the creation of worthwhile science-fiction.

Finally, two non-fiction books which should prove essential to the readers of this magazine. **What is Dungeons & Dragons?** by John Butterfield, David Honigman and Philip Parker (Penguin, £1.50) is the product of three schoolboys, none of them older than 17, and it is an engagingly well written work. It has nine informative chapters on the D&D® game, plus a bibliography. The latter contains some amusing juxtapositions; apparently



game-players will find inspiration in the writings of J. G. Ballard, Beowulf and Alfred Bester; or Stanton A. Coblentz, Dante and Samuel R. Delany; or Homer, Ted Hughes and John Jakes; or even Jonathan Swift, A. E. van Vogt and Virgil. The mind boggles.... gamers are nothing if not eclectic!

Ian Livingstone's **Dicing with Dragons; An Introduction to Role-Playing Games** (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.95) is a somewhat weightier tome, complete with illustrations by Russ Nicholson. In addition to covering all the familiar RPG ground his book contains a useful chapter on computer games. Recommended.

***Stop Press**: The long-awaited concluding part of the second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, **White Gold Wielder**, was released in hardback by Collins (£8.95) on January 27th. The paperback will be released later this year. Dave Pringle will be looking at this and other releases in issue 3. In the same issue we have Dave Langford's short story **Too Good To Be**. Next month Colin Greenland will be reviewing the world of films and video.*

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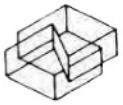

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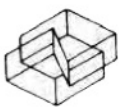

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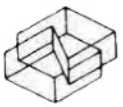

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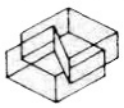

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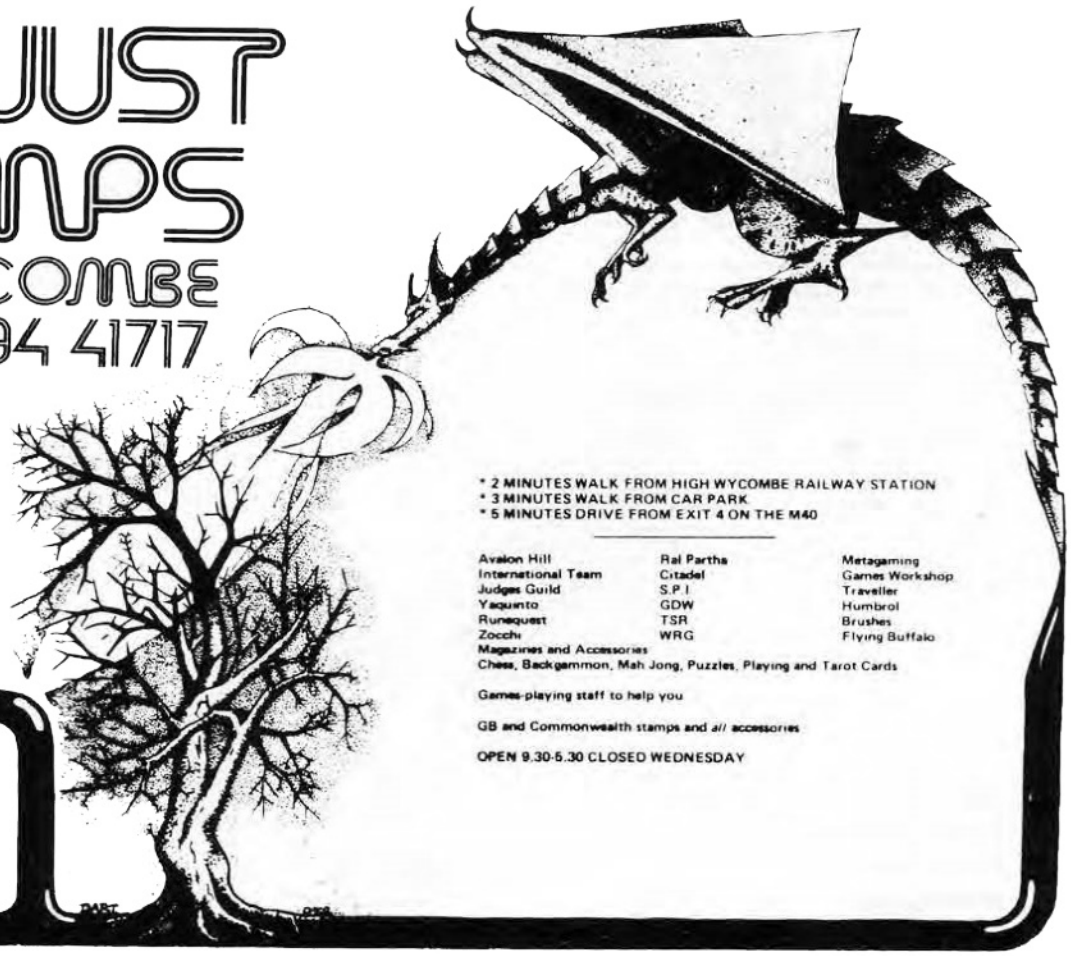

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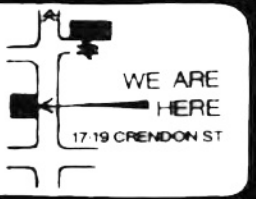


ILLUSIONARY SCRIPT

Times are hard in the city of T'mill. There hasn't been a decent adventure to be had within memory, so most of the citizens have had to find more gainful employment. Fortunately, ACME GREETINGS CARDS have offices in the city, and are always looking for puzzles to include in their popular FEEBLEMIND range of birthday cards. We can now present samples from those selected for this year's cards. There are no prizes to be won beyond the award of 1xp for any character who can solve them....

Boris the Bard has brought a lyrical touch to his puzzle, as always. Try to discover what it is he is talking about:

'Adventuring begins with it,
It's impossible without.
A party's lost for lack of it,
No matter how they shout.

Magic-users use it,
though clerics never do.
A Druid doesn't use it,
But Paladins take two.

An artifact possesses it,
In vanity it lies,
But never in gold or silver,
Or the deep blue summer skies.

Now tell me what my object is,
But before you guess, Beware!
It's deep in ages past and gone,
But in history, nowhere.

An easy enough start, wasn't it? This next one, submitted by some Ogres living outside town (they forced a prisoner to write it down for them) isn't very tricky either.

If seven Ogres kill seven 6th level fighting men in 2 rounds, how long will it take 148 Ogres to kill 148 6th level fighting men (assuming they have plenty of room)?

Though there has been no slack in their business, the local Guild of Assassins sent in the next puzzle. Their letter said they devised it just to kill time....

Four assassins went adventuring together (now what kind of DM was that) but only three came back.

Mankor said: If it was murder, Namath did it.

Namath said: If it was murder, I did not do it.

Ogmath said: If it was not murder, it was suicide.

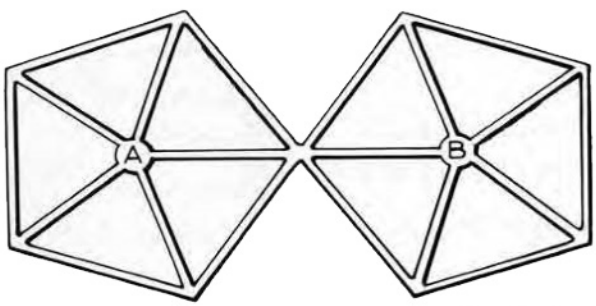
The local magistrate scratched his head and (prompted by the DM) made his judgement: 'If just one of these men is lying, it was suicide.'

So how did Lucas die? Murder or Suicide?

Walking into a village and questioning the inhabitants is part of the fun of any adventure. In this case you need to know who are the key tradesmen and who are to take over from them should any of them vanish. The trouble is, you're not getting any straight answers. There are a smith, a baker, an innkeeper and a magic-user, who are four gentlemen named Smith, Baker, Beerpot and Spell. Unfortunately, none of them follow the profession suggested by their names. Moreover, each has an only son, who is learning the trade of one of the elders. Alas, again, no son is learning the trade his name suggests. Village gossip reveals that Young Beerpot is engaged to the sister of the future magic-user and his father's sister is the current magic-user's wife. Smith Senior is married to the innkeeper's widowed mother. Baker the Elder has no daughter. What professions do Smith, Baker, Beerpot and Spell, and their sons follow?

Many and varied are the ways of T'mill. Not the least strange are the tunnels of the ancient Worms of Earth. Connected in the pattern shown below, the tunnels are now a major tourist attraction, and the tourists all face the same difficult challenge:

How far must one travel to go through each of the tunnels at least once? The bunch radiating from caves A and B are 10 leagues long; the others are 11.6 leagues long.



Puzzles devised by Gordius.

Answers on page 44. ***If you have a puzzle that might amuse the people of T'mill, send it to IMAGINE™ magazine, TSR Hobbies, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE, CB1 4AD.***

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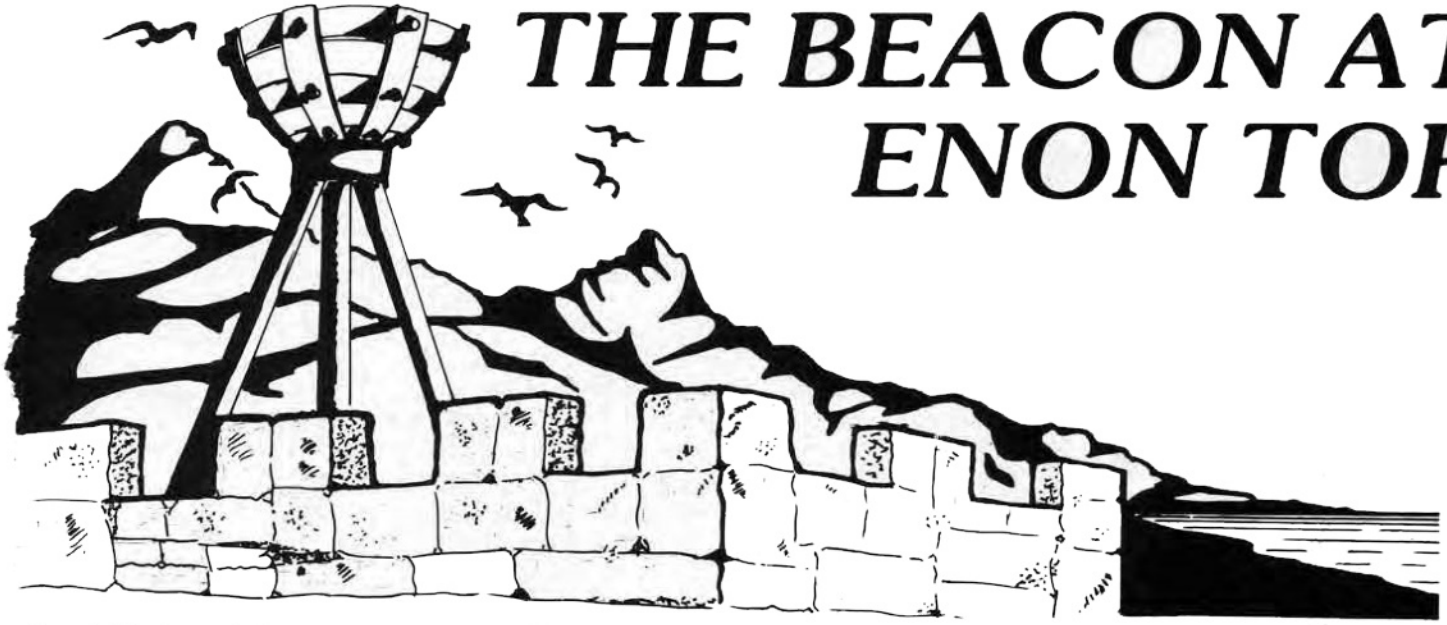


THE BEACON AT ENON TOR

by Michael Brunton with Graeme Morris

BEGINNERS' INTRODUCTORY BASIC D&D® MINI-MODULE FOR 4-7 1st LEVEL CHARACTERS

This mini-module requires information only found in the **D&D® Basic** game rules, and cannot be played without them.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

If you plan to play in this adventure, please stop reading here. The information in the rest of this mini-module is for your Dungeon Master (DM) so that he or she may guide you and the other players through the adventure. Players knowing details of the adventure will spoil the game for everyone concerned.

NOTES FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

The Beacon at Enon Tor is an adventure mini-module consisting of 3 parts, providing notes and reference information for the DM and keys describing the various levels of the beacon.

PART 1 (this section) is an introduction which outlines the rules for the adventure and gives the DM background information about the beacon.

PART 2 describes the beacon, its contents and inhabitants.

PART 3 contains a glossary of all unusual or unfamiliar words. These will be marked by a sword (†) the first time they appear in the text.

The Beacon at Enon Tor is a small adventure and is designed to be completed in one session of play (about 2½ -3 hours). It has been designed for a party of 4-7 player characters. Each character should be of the 1st level of experience at the start of the adventure. The party should have at least one elf or magic-user. A party which contains many different classes will have a better chance of success since this mini-module has been designed to present a wide variety of problems for the player-characters to deal with.

Before the players begin the adventure, the DM should read this mini-module thoroughly to become familiar with its details. In the encounter keys, the information inside a 'box' can be read aloud to the players at the appropriate time. The DM must decide when the rest of the information is discovered by the players or whether to keep certain facts secret.

The DM should always give the player characters a reasonable chance of survival. The emphasis is on the word 'reasonable'. Although there should always be a chance that the unlucky or foolhardy character will die, the DM should give the party the benefit of the doubt whenever possible. Everyone should co-operate to make the adventure enjoyable.

There are no wandering monsters in **The Beacon at Enon Tor**. This is deliberate, so that the DM's task is as simple as possible. All the monsters in this module can be found in the 2nd edition of the **D&D®** Basic rule book (red cover). For the convenience of the DM, when monsters or non-player characters (NPCs) are described in the text, important information will be listed after the name, in brackets, in the following order:

> Name (Armour Class; Hit Dice or Class/Level; hit points; Movement per round; Number of Attacks per round; Damage per attack; Save as Class and Level; Morale; Alignment; Abilities of NPCs if necessary).

Abbreviations used are:

> Armour Class = **AC**; *Classes*: Cleric = **C**, Dwarf = **D**, Elf = **E**, Fighter = **F**, Halfling = **H**, Magic-User = **M**, Thief = **T**, Normal Man = **NM**; Level = **1**, **2**, **3** etc; Hit Dice = **HD**; hit points = **hp**; Movement = **MV**; Number of Attacks = **No.AT**; Damage = **D**; Save as = **Save**; Morale = **ML**; Alignment = **AL**; *Abilities*: Strength = **S**, Intelligence = **I**, Wisdom = **W**, Dexterity = **D**, Constitution = **C**, Charisma = **Ch**.

Class/Level is used only for NPCs, while *Hit Dice* is used for all other monsters. Movement is given only for combat rounds. Movement in a game turn is three times the movement given for one round.

Finally, if this is one of the first times you have been a Dungeon Master, do not worry if the game does not flow smoothly at first. There are bound to be problems to begin with until you, the DM, and your players know how the game works. Stick with it and your patience will be rewarded by an exciting and enjoyable game for all concerned.

Players' Background

The DM should read the following passage to the players before the adventure:

> About 15 years ago Karthedon the wizard arrived at the seaport of Borth. He claimed that Borth was located at an ideal site to carry out magical research, and announced his intention to establish a laboratory in the town.
>
> The local Guildmasters, while deeply honoured that Karthedon had chosen their town, were not keen to see such a dangerous place built where they lived. After much negotiation Karthedon and the Guildmasters arranged a compromise: Karthedon would be allowed to carry out his researches locally in a tower which the Guilds would build at Enon Tor. In return he would operate a navigation beacon at the tower and be on call to help the town should he be needed.
>
> The tower was built, Karthedon moved in, and the arrangements worked well. Fewer ships were lost in the dangerous shoals and the town prospered.
>
> One week ago, however, the whole of Enon Tor was surrounded by a strange shimmering light and that evening the beacon was not lit. The foghorn in the tower, which had started to sound when the fog descended that morning, continued to blow for the next two days then was suddenly silenced and has not been heard since.
>
> Trading activity has been light recently, but the Guildmasters are anxious to find out what has gone wrong before any ships run aground. As a result they have approached your party and offered you 100 gold pièces (gp) each to go to Enon Tor and find out why the beacon is no longer working.

Dungeon Master's Background

The tale above is completely true.

Karthedon has suffered the effects of a magical spell backfiring on him during an experiment in his workroom (room 11). The spell was a **feeblemind**†. Karthedon, a wizard†, is now reduced to a drooling idiot, incapable even of feeding himself, and certainly not capable of spell-casting.

Being a powerful wizard, Karthedon had created a number of zombies to carry out all physical labour required. These undead are still functional but, with the exception of the one operating the foghorn (room 9), are not carrying out any orders other than a general one to defend Karthedon and the beacon.

Two days after Karthedon had his accident, a small band of orc marauders led by a bugbear stumbled across the beacon during a raiding expedition. Realising that it was an easy target they moved in and occupied it.

As the party of adventurers arrive at Enon Tor the situation is that Karthedon is still in his workroom surrounded by his zombie servitors. He is now in a poor condition, not having eaten for a week. The orcs and the bugbear are established in the major part of the beacon. Following an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the zombies in the barracks (room 4) they have not yet summoned the courage to attack the others in the cellar (room 10). As a result the cellar level, where Karthedon's laboratory area is located, is virtually undamaged. The orcs and the bugbear do not know of Karthedon's condition, or even of his existence, because they have not explored the lower level.

PART 2: THE BEACON AT ENON TOR

The beacon is on a wooded headland about 2 miles to the west of Borth. It stands above a 100-foot-high cliff and overlooks dangerous shoal waters. One of the townsmen will take the party to the track that leads to the beacon and tell them in which direction to head. The adventure begins as the party leave the woods which surround Enon Tor on the landward side. At this point the DM should read out the following:

> After walking along the track for a little over 2 miles you are just leaving the cover of the woods. The track continues, leading in the direction of a stone-built tower that has now come into view. You can see that the building is more than just a tower, because there is some sort of stone construction built into the rock below. For the first time since leaving Borth, you can smell the sea.
>
> There are two entrances in plain view. One is in the tower itself, the other is in the stone building.
>
> As far as you can see there is no-one about.

From now on, the players should start making decisions about their characters' actions, based on what information they are given by the DM and their character abilities. The DM should decide how much, and when, information is given to the players.

The entrance doors into the beacon are wooden with iron reinforcements. Both the doors are locked. The keys to the doors are in the locks on the inside. The locks can be picked by a thief. Both doors can be easily opened once unlocked.

1. Living Room

This room appears to be the beaconkeeper's living quarters. A large oak table stands in the middle of the room, surrounded by four upholstered chairs. Pens, parchment, plates (several of them broken), spoons, knives and other oddments are scattered about the floor and across the tabletop. Tapestries used to hang on all four walls, but these are now ripped and despoiled.

In the northeast corner, by the fireplace, is a long bench. Seated on the bench are two ugly human-like creatures, half animal, half man.

The human-like creatures are orcs (AC 6; HD 1; hp 4, 4; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—6; Save F1; ML 8; AL C). They are members of the raiding party led by the bugbear.

When the adventurers enter the room, the two orcs will be arguing loudly, and are not taking any notice of anything else that is going on. If the party enter through the outside door, the DM should remember to ask if they are closing the door behind themselves. If they are not, and it is during the day, the DM should subtract one from the orcs' 'to hit' rolls. Orcs are nocturnal creatures, and detest sunlight.

The orcs have 15gp and 4 glass 'gems', and 7gp and 7 glass 'gems' respectively as their personal treasure. The glass 'gems' are worthless. In the corner where the orcs were arguing is a Nine Men's Morris† set, with ivory and jet pieces and an inlaid rosewood board. The entire set is worth 100gp.

A maximum of 142 experience points (xp) may be gained in this room (10xp for overcoming each of the two orcs, 22xp for the 22gp treasure and 100xp for the value of the Nine Men's Morris set, but only if it is sold).

2. Kitchen

This room appears to be a kitchen. In the northwest corner there is a cooking range with three pots on it. In the northeast corner stands a chopping table with a meat cleaver embedded in it. On the south wall hang a set of shelves. On the shelves there are cooking utensils, herbs and spices and a toast rack.

Below the shelves there is a table with a wooden bucket standing on it.

The three pots on the range contain some stew. The bucket on the table is half full of water. If a character takes the meat cleaver as a weapon, treat it as a normal hand axe.

This room contains nothing of value.

3. Bedroom

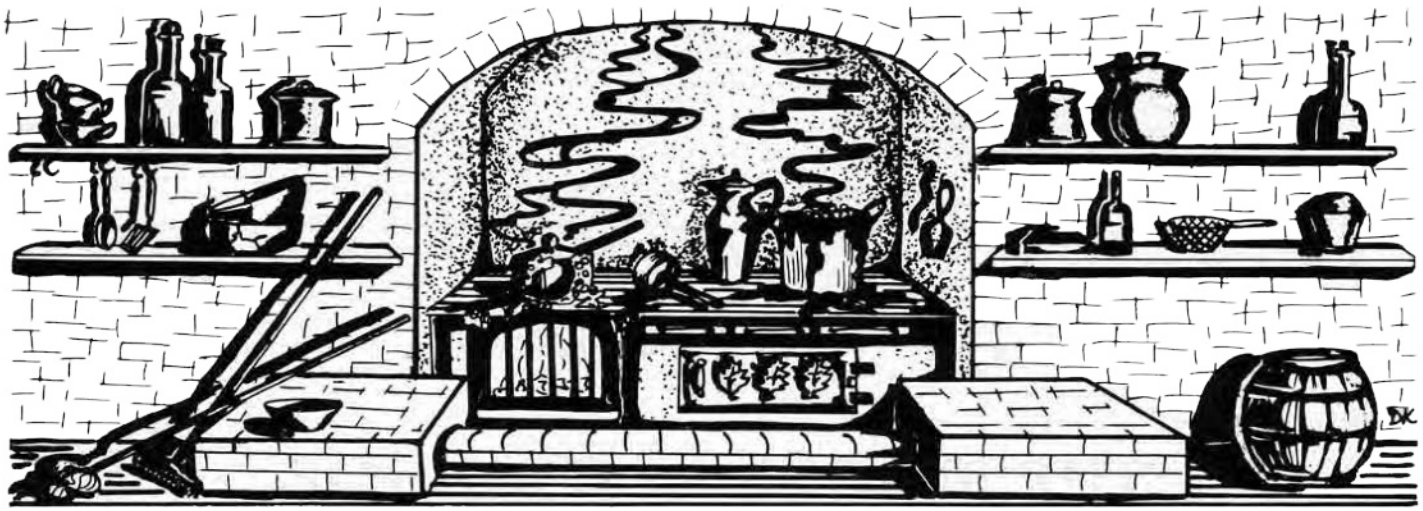
This room contains a bed, two chairs, a table and a large open chest. Clothing is scattered round the room, and several flasks lie on the floor. On the south wall hangs a tapestry showing a battle scene. The room is lit by several large candles in silver candlesticks.

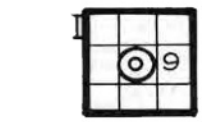
Sitting on the bed is a large, grey, hairy humanoid. Standing next to one of the chairs is an ugly human-like creature.

The large humanoid is a bugbear (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 16; MV 30'; No.AT 1; D 2—8; Save F3; ML 9; AL C) and the ugly human-like creature is an orc (AC 6; HD 1; hp 6; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—6; Save F1; ML 8; AL C).

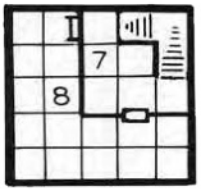
The orc is carrying 9gp in his belt pouch. The bugbear does not have any money on his person; hidden in his left boot is a key. This is the key to a small iron box which is hidden under the bed.

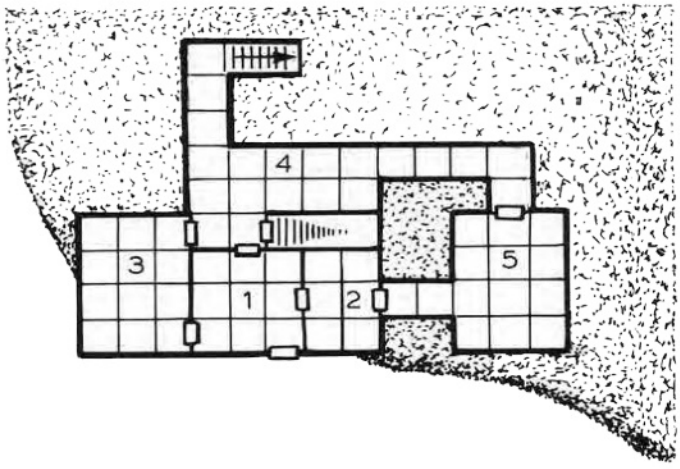
The iron box has a crude lock. The percentage chance of any thief picking this lock is multiplied by 3. If this results in a greater than 100% chance the lock is automatically picked. Inside the box are a silver dagger (worth 30gp), 57gp, 26sp, 10cp, a scroll with the clerical spells **cure light wounds** and **protection from evil** on it, and a leather bag containing 50 glass 'gems' (worthless). If the box is smashed open, the clerical scroll will be ruined and the glass 'gems' shattered.





Tower





Ground Floor

I Ladder

Fire Basket

Stairs (up)

Stairs (down)

Door

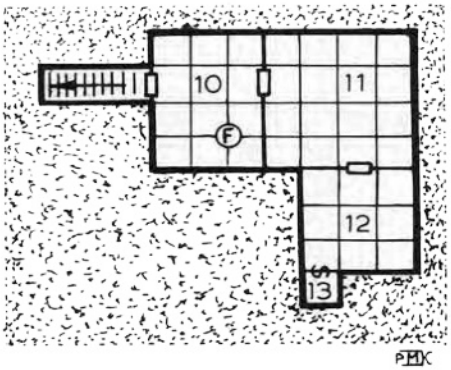
Ⓕ Trapdoor

Bedrock

Wall

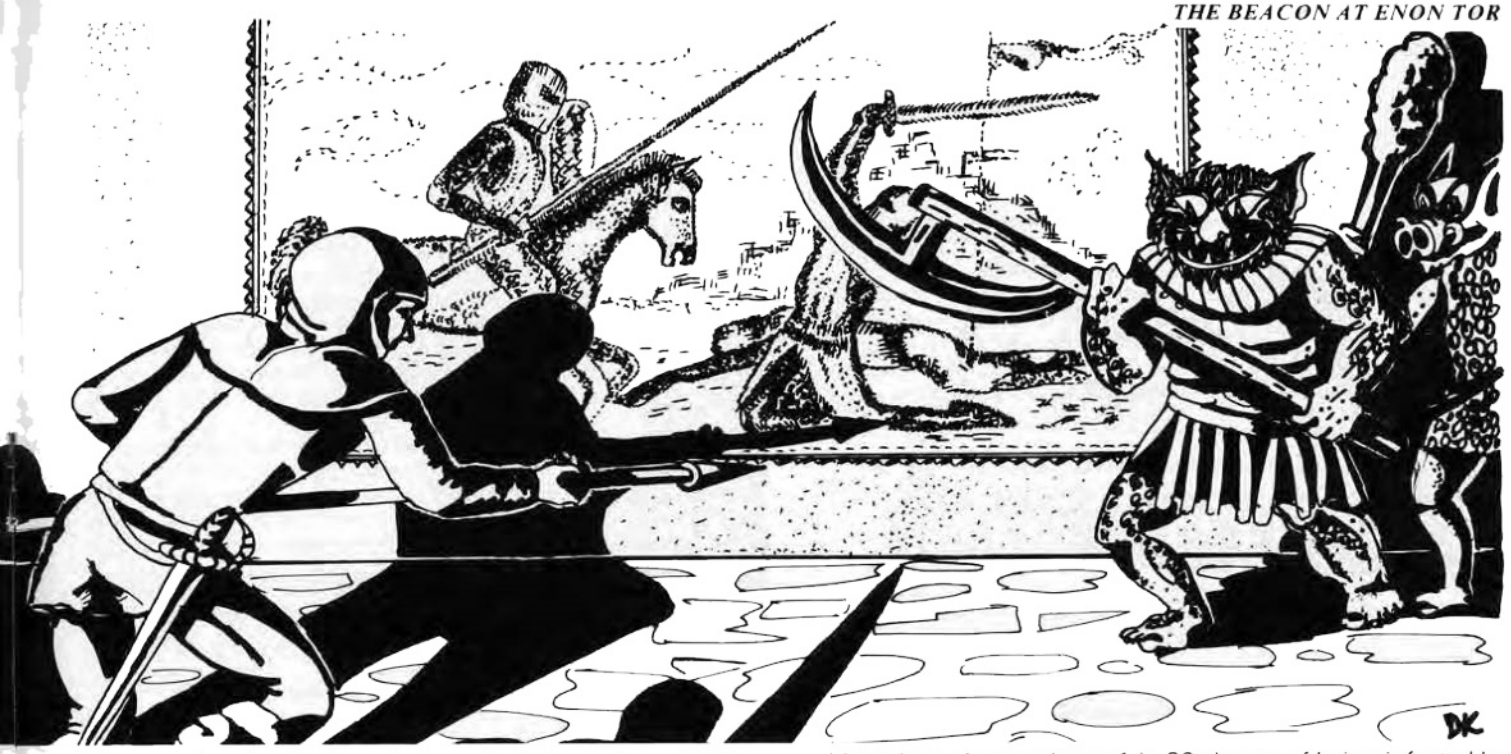
Secret Door

SCALE 0 feet 50



Cellar Level

THE BEACON AT ENON TOR



There are four double-branched candlesticks, each worth 10gp. The tapestry is worth 15gp. The open chest contains only clothes. All the flasks are empty, but smell of wine.

Experience points for overcoming the bugbear are 50xp and for the orc 10xp. Experience points for non-monetary treasure should be awarded only if the items are sold.

4. Zombie Quarters

> This room contains 10 boxes, each about 7 feet long and 2 feet broad and deep. Four are leaning against the north wall, the rest lie flat upon the floor. One of the boxes against the north wall is open and contains the remains of a man. On the floor of the room lie two ugly, human-like bodies.

Each of these boxes is a coffin/storebox for one of Karthedon's zombies. Only two of the boxes are occupied by functional zombies (AC 8; HD 2; hp 9, 8; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—8; Save F1; ML 12; AL C), who will not attack unless their boxes are opened. The occupied boxes are leaning against the north wall. If a cleric turns these zombies they will return to their rest in their boxes. Zombies are undead monsters and may be 'turned' by a cleric. They are not affected by sleep or charm spells. Zombies are slow fighters and always strike last in a round (no initiative roll is needed).

The human body in the open box was a zombie, and the other corpses were orcs. The orcs have 7gp and 3 glass 'gems' and 3gp and 12 glass 'gems'. The gems are worthless. Overcoming the zombies is worth 40xp (20xp each).

5. Storeroom

> This room contains a dozen barrels. Several sacks are stacked on a low table. A large smoked ham hangs from a hook in the ceiling.

This is the beacon's food store. The various barrels contain ale, wine, salted meats (both pork and beef), apples, vegetables and salt. The sacks contain grain and flour.

Two giant rats (AC 7; HD ½; hp 3,2; MV 40'; # AT 1; D 1-3 + disease; Save F1; ML 8; AL C) have moved into the storerooms and have taken up residence in the grain sacks. They will only attack if the grain sacks are disturbed in some way. Anyone bitten by a giant rat has a 1 in 20 chance of being infected by disease (this is checked each time the victim is bitten). The victim may avoid the disease by making a saving throw vs. Poison, otherwise the victim will die in 1-6 days or be bedridden for one month. The DM should roll 1d4, the disease being deadly only on a roll of 1.

Overcoming the rats is worth 10xp. In their lair are 2gp, and a worthless glass 'gem'. There is nothing else of value in the storeroom.

6. Main Beacon Storage Chamber

> This room contains 9 large barrels. Scattered about the room are: 2 coils of rope, a hammer, two dozen torches, a lantern, a saw, an axe, a dozen iron spikes, several pieces of timber, four pulley blocks, a bucket full of nails, a bucket full of a black substance, three hooks, ten empty sacks, a length of sailcloth, a set of blacksmith's bellows and a broken cartwheel.
>
> Against the eastern wall is a pile of faggots.†

All but one of the barrels contain oil. The last one is empty. The black substance is tar. None of the items is valuable.

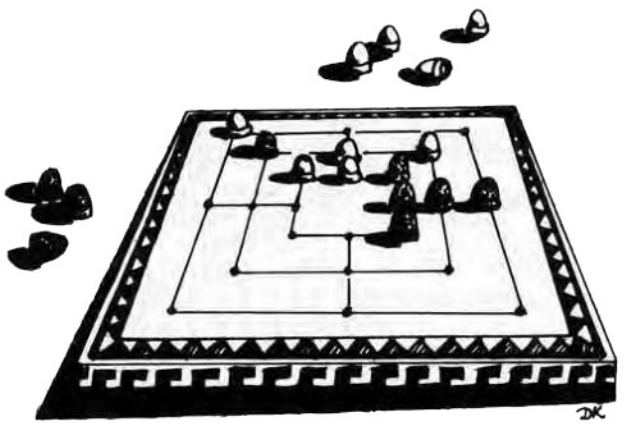
7. Beacon Garret†

> As you enter this room you see two creatures detach themselves from the ceiling and flutter towards you. As the air fills with high-pitched squeaks you notice that an outside door in the south wall stands ajar.

The monsters are giant bats (AC 6; HD 2; hp 8, 7; MV (flying) 60'; No.AT 1; D 1—4; Save F1; ML 8; AL N).

The garret contains the equipment and stores used at short notice to operate the beacon. Four sacks of kindling and a stack of ten faggots lie on the floor in the middle of the room. In the northwest corner of the room is a large iron basket. On a hook by the stairs hangs a coil of rope. On a shelf by the door is a telescope (worth 100gp) in a leather case, and an iron box without a lock which contains some tinder, flint and steel.

Everything is slightly damp because the door has been open for a week. Overcoming the bats is worth 40xp (20xp each).



8. Walkway

> This walkway has a 4-foot-high crenellated† stone wall running round it.

Once the party can see the northwest section of the walkway the DM should read the following:

> In the northeast corner of this piece of the walkway an iron ladder, leading up to the beacon itself, is set into the stonework of the tower. The ladder is covered in rust, except for patches in the middle of the rungs where bare metal shines through.

The ladder is entirely safe, and there is nothing else of interest on the walkway.

9. The Beacon

> This is the top of the tower. A 3-foot-high crenellated wall surrounds this storey. In the centre of the floor stands a 15-foot-high iron tripod supporting a large iron basket. In the basket, and around the tripod, are large quantities of ash. Stacked in the southwest corner are 6 faggots. In the southeast corner is an iron construction which is obviously some type of lifting equipment.
>
> In the northwest corner a human figure can be seen working a set of blacksmith's bellows apparently connected to a foghorn. No sound, other than that of rushing air, is emerging.

The figure is a zombie (AC 8; HD 2; hp 6; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—8; Save F1; ML 12; AL C). The zombie's last orders from Karthedon were to sound the foghorn. When the bugbear and the orcs arrived they cut the pipe between the bellows and the foghorn, but left the zombie working the bellows. The zombie will not attack unless the party attempt to stop it carrying out its appointed task.

Overcoming the zombie is worth 20xp.

10. Cellar

> This is a storage cellar. All around the walls are shelves with wooden boxes on them. In the south west corner is a trapdoor in the floor. Standing in the room are four pale, corpse-like men.

The four are zombies (AC 8; HD 2; hp 8, 6, 4, 2; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—8; Save F1; ML 12; AL C), part of Karthedon's retinue. They will attack anyone who enters the room.

The boxes contain Karthedon's experimental materials. Only one of the boxes does not have a label and it is locked. The key is on a chain round Karthedon's neck (in room 11). The labelled boxes do not have locks and contain exactly what their labels (written in Common) say: fluorspar†, chalk, sulphur, powdered copper, powdered lead, quicksilver† (in a stoneware bottle), dried blood, salt, iron filings, seaweed, herbs, snake legs, vinegar (also in a stoneware bottle), parchment, quill pens, ink (in the form of square blocks to be mixed with water when needed), sealing wax, stirge feathers, medusa bones, stuffed voles, glassware, bats' ears, crypt dust, and dried roots.

The box labelled 'snake legs' is empty. The locked box can be opened by a thief using the normal percentage chance of success for picking locks. It contains three small leather pouches. One contains gold dust (worth 15gp), one powdered silver (worth 3gp) and the last holds 12 small pearls (worth 10gp each).

The trapdoor in the floor is a cover for the beacon's well. The water level is 15 feet below floor level.

Overcoming the zombies is worth 80xp (20xp each).

11. Wizard's Workroom.

> This is obviously a laboratory or workroom. There are two long workbenches in the room, each with a set of four stools. One of the tables is covered in parchment, pens, intricate glassware and two candlesticks with burnt out candles. A body, dressed in long, filthy robes, is slumped over the workbench.
>
> Two pale, corpse-like figures stand guard over the body.
>
> In the southwest corner of the room is a cage with two giant rats in it. Both look half-starved.

The body is in fact Karthedon (AC 9; M 10; hp 1(24); MV 0'; No.AT 0; D 0; Save M1+2(10); ML 0; AL N; S 9; I 3(18); W 10; C 16; D 14; Ch 12), and he is not yet dead. These statistics represent Karthedon's current condition, hence the ratings for hit points, movement and intelligence. The value in the brackets is the normal one. Karthedon is suffering from a **feeblemind** spell and one week's lack of food and water. Saving rolls for Karthedon are the same as for a 1st level magic-user, with a +2 to the die roll.

The pale figures are zombies (AC 8; HD 2; hp 8, 5; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—8; Save F1; ML 12; AL C). Their last orders were to defend Karthedon, and they will attack if anyone approaches Karthedon's body.

On a chain round Karthedon's neck are two keys. One is the key to the locked box in the cellar (room 10), the other is the key to the chest in the secret chamber (room 13).

When the **feeblemind** spell backfired on Karthedon he knocked over a vial of acid, which destroyed many of his experimental notes. An elf or a magic user will be able to work out that Karthedon was casting a **feeblemind** spell if he or she studies the notes. He or she will also understand that a **dispel magic** will cure Karthedon. However, a 1st level magic-user or elf is incapable of understanding the underlying structure and symbolism of the **feeblemind** spell itself.

If a **dispel magic** is cast on Karthedon he will suitably reward the party for helping him. From the secret chamber (room 13) he will give the party 1000gp, 10 **arrows +1**, a **mace +1**, a potion of **invisibility** and a scroll of the spells **magic missile**, **charm person**, and **web**. Karthedon cannot remember any spells.

The cage in the corner of the room holds two giant rats (AC 7; HD 1—4 hp; hp 2,3; MV 40'; No.AT 1; D 1—3 + disease; Save F1; ML 12; AL N). These are Karthedon's experimental animals, and, because they have not been fed for a week, they will attack anyone who opens the cage. Anyone bitten by a rat has a 1 in 20 chance of being infected by disease (this chance should be checked each time a rat successfully hits). The victim may still avoid the disease by making a saving throw vs. Poison. If failed, the victim will either die in 1—6 (1d6) days, or will be sick in bed and unable to adventure for a month. The disease is only deadly on a result of 1 on a 1d4.

Overcoming the zombies is worth 40xp (20xp each) and the rats are worth 10xp (5xp each). Killing Karthedon is worth only 5xp in his present state.

There is no treasure in this room.

12. Wizard's Study.

> This chamber is a study. All four walls are hung with tapestries depicting the twelve signs of the Zodiac. On the floor is a rug with a pentacle† design on it. The furniture consists of a table, a reading stand, a bookcase and an upholstered chair. There are two silver candlesticks on the table.

The twelve tapestries (one for each sign) are worth 300gp as a set and 15gp each. The rug is worth 75gp. The silver candlesticks are worth 20gp each.

Lying on the table are three rolled parchment sheets. One is a charter from the Guilds of Borth granting Karthedon the right to live in the Beacon. The second is a plan of the Beacon (it does not show room 13). The third is a scroll with the spell **dispel magic** on it.

The DM should feel free to invent some titles for the books in the bookcase and to decide if any of the books are saleable.

13. Secret Chamber

> This small chamber contains nothing but a closed chest.

This chest is locked. The key is on a chain around Karthedon's neck (room 11). If a thief attempts to pick the lock and fails he or she will be stabbed by a spring-loaded needle hidden in the lock. He or she should save vs. Poison or die in 1—4 turns. The poison needle can be found and removed by a thief using the normal percentage chances for these skills before trying to pick the lock.

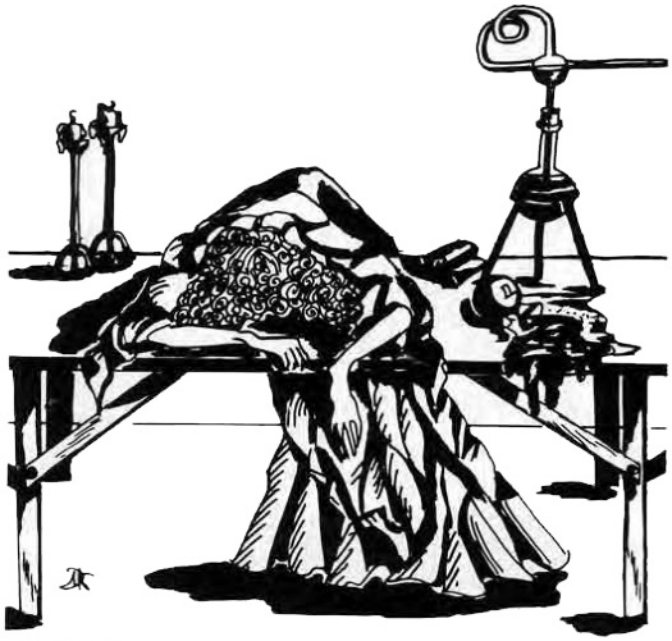
The chest can also be forced open by characters with a combined strength of 35 or more.

Inside the chest are nine bags of coins (8 of 200gp and 1 of 40gp), a small bag of gems (5 gems worth 10gp each, 2 worth 50gp each and 1 worth 100gp), 10 **arrows +1**, a **mace +1**, a **dagger +1**, a spell scroll of **magic missile**, **charm person** and **web**, a potion of **healing**, a potion of **invisibility**, and a **wand of magic detection** (3 charges).

The DM should note that Karthedon may already have given the party some of this treasure.

PART 3: GLOSSARY

crenellated: walls that are crenellated have traditional battlements at the top exactly like castle walls.
faggot: a bundle of firewood.
feeblemind: this is a spell which can only be cast by high-level magic-users or elves. It makes a magic-user or elf unable to think or cast spells, turning its victim into a helpless idiot. The spell effect lasts until negated by a **dispel magic**. Full details of this spell can be found in the **D&D Expert** rule book on page X16, but this description is sufficient for use in this mini-module.
fluorspar: a mineral.
garret: a room just under the roof of a building.
Nine Men's Morris: a medieval game played by two people with nine counters each on a pattern consisting of three squares, one within another.
pentacle: a figure resembling a five-pointed star.
quicksilver: the metal mercury.
tor: a hill or rocky height.
Wizard: Wizard is the highest level title of the magic-user class.



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Playtesting: Alan McNamara, Mike Telford and other members of the Kirklees Military Modelling & Gaming Society.

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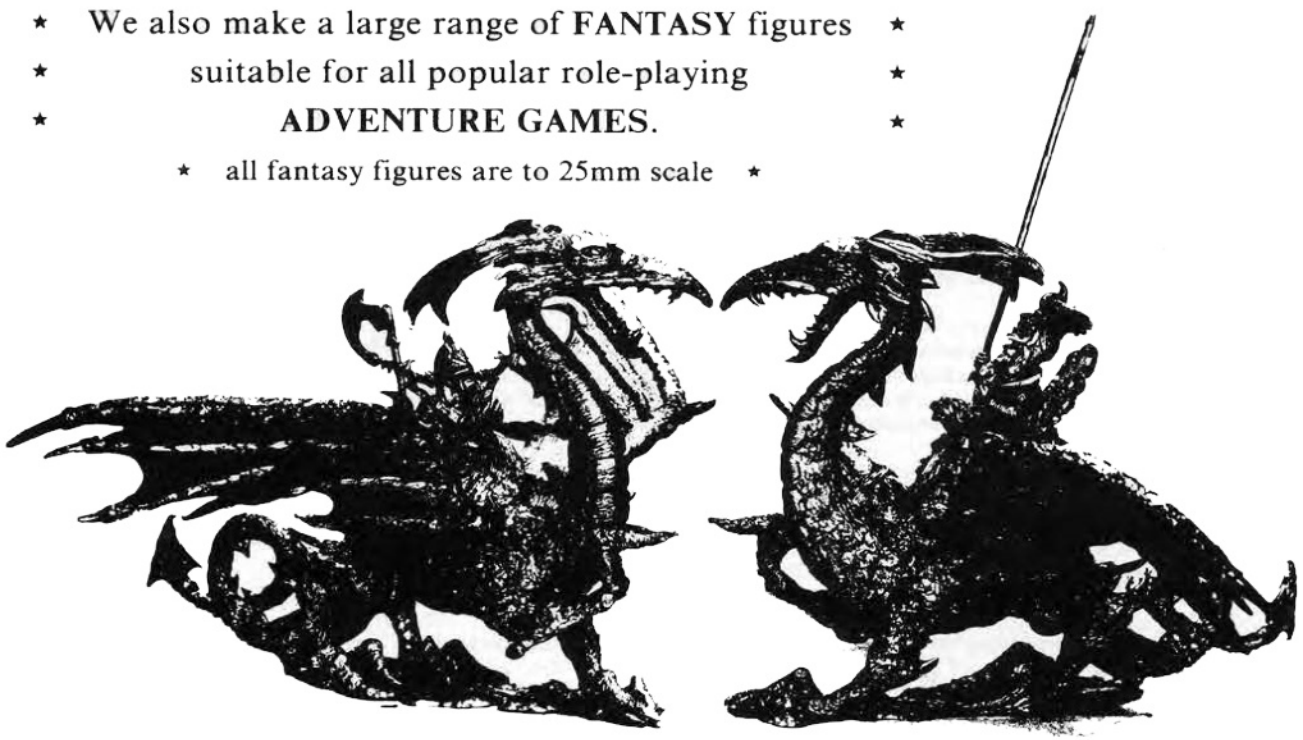

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The PA is a club for all players of role playing games particularly the D&D® and AD&D™ games. Since it was founded in 1981, the PA has become the country's largest D&D club, and now has its own 4-page section of IMAGINE™ magazine. The benefits of membership include:

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* Free postage and packing on mail orders from TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. for UK and BFPO members.
* Discounts on tickets for GamesFair hobby conventions.
* Listings of PA members in your area (send SAE).

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D&D® PLAYERS ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE BRITISH
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PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

PAN PIPINGS

Editorial by Graeme Morris

It shouldn't happen on a Monday! When I arrived this morning I was greeted by the smiling faces of the IMAGINE™ magazine staff and their cry of 'Copy date! Where's your editorial for the Players Association section?' So here goes....

It occurs to me that one of my first jobs should be to provide a brief history of the D&D® Players Association (known to its friends as the PA) and the way in which these four pages relate to the Association and this publication in general.

Once upon a time — 1980 no less — there was a strange publication called the 'TSR-UK Hobby Newsletter'; several photo-copied sheets of information which were sent out free by the embryonic TSR UK. It ran to six issues, during which time Tom Kirby, still in the first flush of his youth (it was a long time ago!), launched the D&D Players Association through its pages.

His idea was that it would serve a dual role; to provide benefits for members (all the entitlements which still apply, in fact) and to allow a two-way flow of information between TSR and those who play games.

The flow of information into TSR was easy — people were very keen to write in with comments on games, news about their clubs and events etc. To send information back the other way, however, a publication of some kind was needed and so the D&D Players Association Newsletter (PAN) was born. The first issue appeared in March 1981, with further issues coming out every other month. Yours truly appeared on the scene in mid-1981 and, by dint of much devious plotting, usurped the editor's chair by # 8 and carried it through to # 12.

Then IMAGINE magazine turned up. With a hobby magazine destined for a far wider circulation about to be launched in the same building, it was obvious that PAN could not compete for contributions, resources or effort. It was decided that # 12 should be the last issue of PAN as a magazine in its own right. The Association had to live on, of course, but needed a new mouthpiece. Thus PAN moved sideways into this four-page section, bringing its most popular features with it. We were all saddened by the end of PAN, but I am sure that these features, and the PA in general must benefit from the wider airing which the new magazine will give.

Don Turnbull (author of Turnbull Talking) is known to all associated with hobby games but, to those who have just joined us, I offer this introduction. Don built his reputation in the field of hobby games by a conspicuous and active interest at a time when most people hadn't heard of it. Not content with this, he played a pivotal role in the founding of TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. (of which he is now MD) and so deserves much of the credit for the success of role playing games in Britain.

Rubic of Moggedon, product of the strange minds and pens of Runic Press International is another refugee from PAN, raring to go with a new full-page format.

Next comes Dispel Confusion, the rules 'questions and answers' feature. In PAN, Mike and I stuck firmly to the AD&D™ and D&D games, but now we are spreading our wings to cover other games.

Finally, there will be this editorial section every month, when I get the chance to put my rantings in print.

All of these are intended for the interest of members and non-members alike. The special offers and so on are for members only, however. Cast your eyes over what we have on offer and if you like what you see, join us!

SPECIAL PA OFFERS

Please note that the following offers are available **only** to members of the D&D® Players Association. Details of the PA and how to join are given on page 29 of this magazine.

BARGAIN BASEMENT

The Bargain Basement (lair of the infamous Karen) is the place where we consign all the stock which, for some reason or other, can no longer be sold as 'perfect'. The degree of imperfection varies from a missing shrink-wrap to the lack of a page in a module, for example. The items all have two things in common, however, they are all on sale at amazingly reduced prices and none of them is rubbish.

PA members can obtain an up-to-date list of available Bargain Basement items by sending an S.A.E. to Bargain Basement at the address given below. Don't forget to quote your PA membership number.

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The 'R series' AD&D™ adventure modules are produced by the RPGA™ organisation in the USA and are available in the UK only to PA members. Each of the modules was designed for use in a GEN CON® tournament and is suitable for normal campaign play as well as having extra details and pre-rolled characters for tournament-style use.

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'MILL DAYS'

Mill Days are Saturday gaming sessions which take place here at the Mill in Cambridge. This year we are planning to hold about half a dozen covering a variety of games. The first will be on Saturday, 23rd April.

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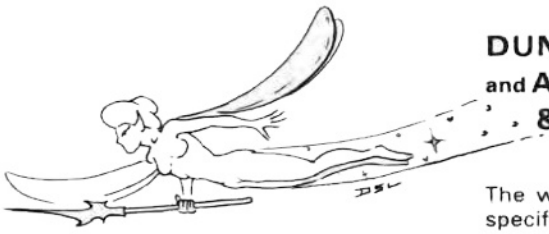
DISPEL CONFUSION



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games

Dispel Confusion is a question and answer column intended to help hobby gamers overcome problems they have had with game rules. You may wonder why such a column is necessary, but its existence does not imply that the rules are difficult or incomplete. They are open to interpretation, because they put a premium on flexibilty and have to handle a wide variety of situations.

To begin with Dispel Confusion will restrict itself to games produced by TSR Hobbies. The answers we come up with may not be fully 'official', but at least we have contact with the game designers themselves.

In future, we hope to expand the range of subjects covered to games other than TSR products by getting answers from the people who make and design them. All we need are the questions.

Send questions to:

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The words in brackets after a question specify which system is being dealt with in the question and its answer. 'Basic' and 'Expert' refer to the D&D® game rules, and 'Advanced' refers to the AD&D™ game rules.

Q. What does T.S.R. stand for?

A. At present, nothing. This is a hangover from the days when the company used to be called Tactical Studies Rules.

Q. Although seventeen pantheons are mentioned on the back of the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia, only fifteen are detailed inside. Why is this? (Advanced)

A. The first edition did indeed give details of seventeen sets of gods and heroes, but the second and all subsequent editions only gave information on fifteen. The two pantheons that were dropped, Michael Moorcock's Melnibonean mythos (the Elric stories), and H. P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos, disappeared because other companies produced games on those subjects, and the copyright holders withdrew their permission for us to use them.

Q. When is the D&D Companion Set going to be published? (Basic/Expert)

A. The D&D Companion Set, detailing character progress above the 14th level, is currently undergoing development in America. At present we do not have a reliable release date.

Q. How do you recharge rods, staves and wands? (Advanced)

A. The method of recharging rods etc. is not clearly stated, so it is up to the Dungeon Master to devise a procedure which is sufficiently expensive/difficult/time-consuming to make the act of trying to obtain magic items by adventuring (the real idea of AD&D games) at least as attractive as charging up old ones.

We suggest that an enchant an item spell (a 6th level magic user spell) would be needed, but that the use of it will be simpler than constructing a magic item from scratch.

Q. What is the chance of detecting someone who is invisible? (Basic/Advanced)

A. In the Basic D&D rules an invisible person is simply invisible, until they attack.

In the AD&D rules the percentage chance of detecting someone who is invisible is given on p.60 of the Dungeon Masters Guide.

TURNBULL TALKING

A little space set aside to let the publisher air his views.

To a games enthusiast, it's surprising how little the general public know about the hobby and how much misunderstanding exists. I don't need to convince you of the fun and enjoyment to be gained from the hobby. Though I am not, I hope, on the verge of incipient collapse due to old age I have been around the hobby games scene for over thirty years; yet the joy is still fresh and no persuasion whatsoever is needed to get me hot-foot to a games session or weekend. Indeed, I have met my best and closest freinds through gaming and these friendships have endured. After all, why do we play games in the first place? A whole mixture of reasons, I guess, but one of them (in my view the most important) is that we do so because we enjoy the company of the other people involved.

One of the main fallacies, it seems to me, is that games are seen by non-gamers as highly competitive (and in their language the word 'competitive' is a pejorative one). For some reason a competitive sport like soccer, basketball or squash is socially acceptable while a game can be an object of derision.

But there's nothing more competitive than international chess, and club bridge can easily turn, at least mentally, into a veritable blood-bath — yet chess and bridge are respectable enough.

In any case, the arrival of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, in which there are no winners or losers and hence no competition, rather knocked this idea on the head. Though it is interesting to notice that the critic who castigates games on the grounds that they are competitive will often, when he hears that there are no winners in a D&D® game, respond 'what sort of a daft game is this if you can't win it?' Obviously debates involving such people are not concerned with spurious trivia like logic or consistency.

The miniature wargames enthusiasts regularly come in for undeserved criticism along the lines of 'playing with toy

In both sets of rules, invisibility does not alter the amount of noise that someone or something makes or mask their scent.

Q. Why, in combat, are all the 'to hit' rolls the same, regardless of the weaponry used? (Basic/Advanced)

A. The D&D games are intended to be adventure games, not simulations of the detailed hack and slay of combat. The emphasis is on the adventure, not mere killing. However, the AD&D rules do have a set of optional modifiers for the 'to hit' rolls.

Q. What does the number of spells a magic user may 'remember' mean? (Advanced)

A. This question covers three distinct areas. The first is how many spells a magic user may remember (i.e. have ready for use) at any one time, the second is which spells are in the magic user's spell book, and the third is which spells the magic user is capable of understanding.

The number of spells that a magic user may have on call in his mind is given in the 'Spells Usable by Class and Level — Magic-Users' table on p.26 of the Players Handbook.

Spells in a magic user's spell book are simply words written on a page, like recipes in a cookbook. They are initially given to the magic user by his master. Magic users usually start with four spells, one being read magic, and the others being determined by the method given on page 39 of the Dungeon Masters Guide.

With the exception of the initial allotment of spells, the inclusion of a spell in a magic user's spell book does not mean that he can use it. The spell's underlying logic and symbolism must be understood before it can be learnt and cast. This is often referred to as 'knowing' the spell, and the rules for determining which spells are known are given on page 10 of the Players Handbook.

In order to cast a spell the magic user must fulfil all three conditions. That is, he must have the spell in his spell book, he must be able to understand (know) the spell, and he must be of high level to hold the spell in his mind. All this is in addition to acquiring the spell 'recipe' in the first place, having any material components, and taking time to learn the spell. Magic use is not a quick way to power, riches and easy living.

Q. How long does a darkness spell cast by a demon last? (Advanced)

A. The darkness cast by a demon is not a spell, but an inherent ability. Demons can cast darkness while engaged in any other activity. Since it can be cast at will, the darkness so caused will last as long as the demon wishes.

STAR FRONTIERS™ Adventure Game

Q. Why do the Dralasites of Inner Reach in the Dramune system dye their skins different colours to show their emotions? The racial description in the expanded rulebook states that Dralasites are colour blind.

A. Dralasites are colour blind, but they can sense the difference between distinct colours. They cannot sense the difference between shades of the same colour.

Q. When a character gains a skill level, does he gain the new level in all the subskills or only some of them? If only in some, are these chosen at random?

A. When a character gains a level in any skill he also increases his chances of successfully performing any of the subskills. The Writing Programs subskill of Computer skill is slightly different. The character gains the ability to write one program with each level that he gains, but can write all the programs he knows at his current skill level. The program that the character learns is chosen by the player.

Mike Brunton
Graeme Morris

soldiers at your age?' The same critic would almost certainly regard chess as an acceptable, intellectual pursuit, without for a moment realising that miniature wargaming is chess on a grand, more complex, scale.

It has to be said that the media are sometimes unhelpful. The journalist who comes to see us at TSR about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game is probably hoping, generally speaking, to make a riveting story about weirdos dressing up in cardboard armour and hitting each other with tinplate swords. Perhaps he hopes for something really juicy. The truth, when he discovers it, is much more prosaic.

He then has three options. He either dresses up a story which isn't true; drops the matter altogether; or tells the truth. Fortunately some of these people are responsible and do the job properly. Unfortunately others are not. Even more are responsible but stupid — they get the facts wrong and write about them in the earnest belief they are true.

The Mail on Sunday magazine 'YOU' probably falls into this last category. In November, the magazine contained an article, with photographs, which was supposed to be about the D&D game. Unfortunately they assumed that what goes on at Peckforten Castle in Cheshire is actually D&D; now, what goes on there is, I believe, entertaining and interesting, but D&D it certainly isn't. As a result there are people out there who think it is — will the Mail on Sunday tell them the correct version?

Others cannot be let off as careless or stupid. In February 1982 a prominent national magazine — no names, it's all over now — printed an article that announced, without any fear of misinterpretation that DUNGEONS & DRAGONS could kill — literally kill. Now TSR is proud of its reputation and its products and trademarks; we are certainly not going to let insulting nonsense like this go unchallenged. After a brief legal skirmish, the publishers formally apologised and paid our legal costs and a considerable sum by way of damages. Plainly, they have learned a lesson.

As usual, I have wandered a bit from the subject (you will get used to this). Of course the problem is not a particularly important one — gamers don't need the approval of others and can enjoy their hobby perfectly well without it. Nor need gamers feel paranoid — we may be a minority but we are certainly not oppressed. Nevertheless, it's a little odd to derive such enjoyment from a hobby which others seem to find totally mystifying. In the end, it's the fun that counts.

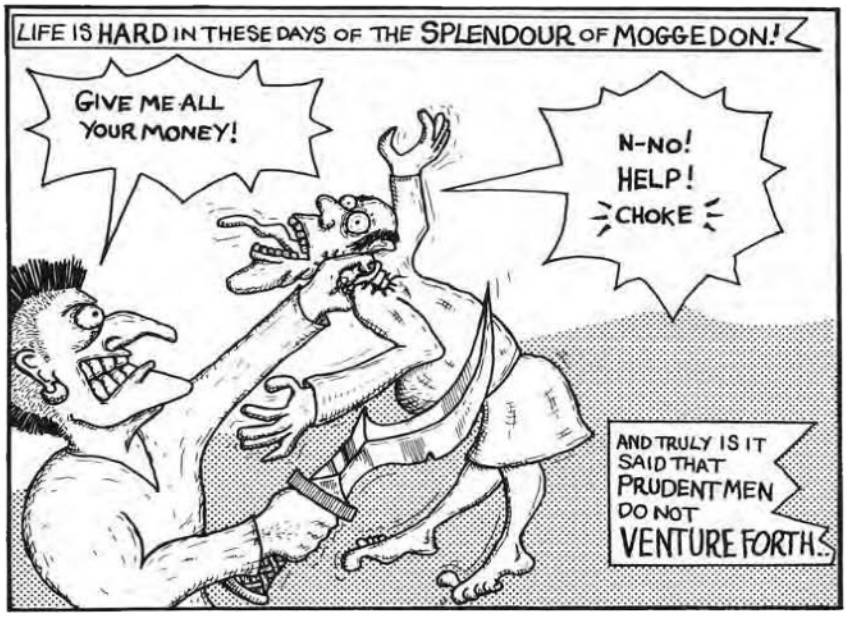
Don Turnbull

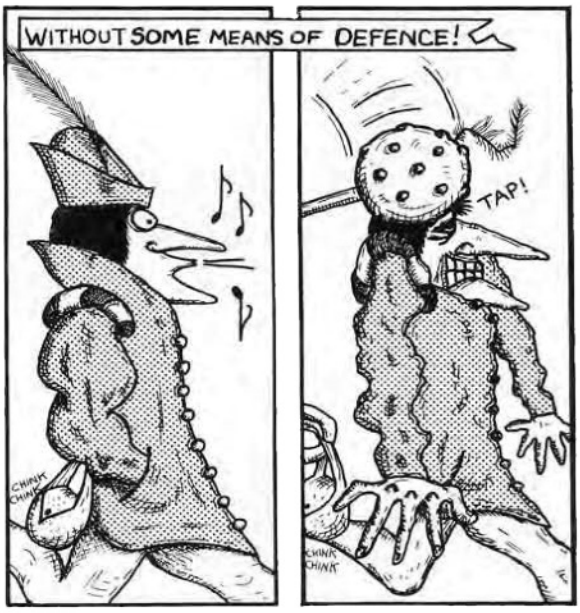
KNOW THEN, OH CHILDREN OF THESE LESSER TIMES, THAT AFTER THE GREAT CATACLYSM THERE CAME AN AGE OF WONDERS, WHEN SEVEN MIGHTY KINGDOMS ENCOMPASSED THE KNOWN WORLD. FROM MOGGEDON, GREATEST OF MORTAL REALMS, CAME RUBIC, CHAMPION OF DESTINY, TO SET THE WORLD AFLAME WITH THE FURY OF HIS PASSING. THIS IS HIS TALE.

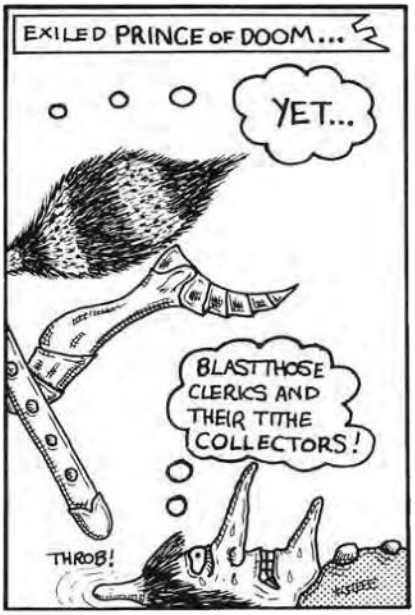
THE SAGA OF RUBIC OF MOGGEDON

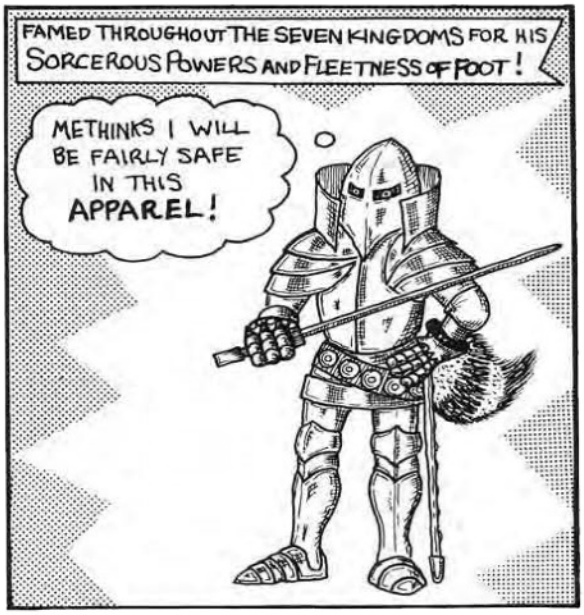
DEPRIVED MOST CRUELLY OF HIS BIRTHRIGHT BY THE BLACK SLANDERS OF MALICIOUS FOEMEN, LEGEND TELLS THAT RUBIC, FLEEING MOGGEDON FOR HIS VERY LIFE, CAME ALONE TO TRANQUIL EUTHANASIA, THERE TO SEEK ANEW IN THE REALMS OF MEN THE FORTUNE AND THE FAME DENIED HIM IN HIS NATIVE LAND.

—THE CHRONICLES OF MOGGEDON—


LIFE IS HARD IN THESE DAYS OF THE SPLENDOUR OF MOGGEDON!
GIVE ME ALL YOUR MONEY!
N-NO! HELP! CHOKE
AND TRULY IS IT SAID THAT PRUDENT MEN DO NOT VENTURE FORTH!



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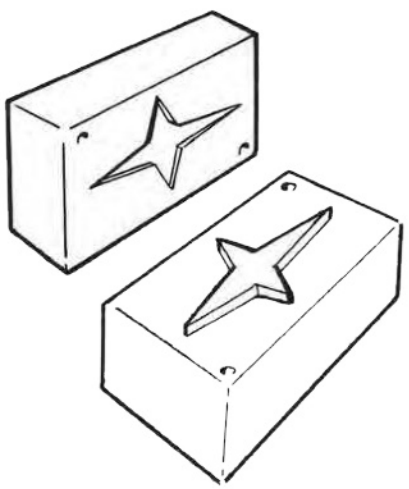

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'Sir. Sir? Wake up sir, it's opening time!'

Alright, Godfrey, let me finish this pint, huh?... Oh! Sorry, ladies and gentlemen, I didn't notice you there. Welcome to the Red Lion, IMAGINE™ magazine's only public house. My name is Pete, and I'm your landlord....

No, I can't go on; it's too corny. This, in case you hadn't already guessed, is where the amateur part of the hobby gets into the magazine. This column is to be written by and for hobbyists. Why? Let me explain.

Imagine yourself out in the wilderness somewhere. The GM has persuaded your party to go off in search of the fabled Missing Finger of the Dwarf Lord, Gror, or some equally lunatic quest, and you don't have the faintest idea of where to start. You've headed off in a random direction, turned round and gone the other way because the GM hadn't mapped that bit, and eventually found yourself in an isolated village. You need some information, fast. Throg, the wizard, as is his wont, takes out his crystal ball and corners the GM for 3 hours whilst he does his divinations. Tuokainen the elf grabs a passing hobbit and threatens to do unpleasant things to its toenails unless it tells him what he wants to know: the hobbit gets onto the 17th chapter of its autobiography before it realises what the elf wants. The rest of you, possessed of more common sense, pile into the nearest pub and quiz the locals. Get the picture?

No, Godfrey, this column is not about doing unpleasant things to hobbits' toenails. See what I'm up against? The high class contributors to this rag get quality gnomish craftsmen as assistants — I get a lousy kobold! He's no too bad I suppose, quite bright really, just a little wicked.

The idea of the column, as far as I can discern the wishes of the shadowy Dark Masters who control this enterprise, is that it should be about gossip. This does not mean, Paul Mason please note, that it is to be a pale imitation of Gigi d'Arn's column in **Different Worlds**. The charming Gigi (you are reading this, aren't you dear?) has an undoubted talent for garnering gossip which I could not hope to match, so I'm not going to make an idiot of myself trying. Nor do I intend to emulate those awful society columns in newspapers. The thought of telling you that Steve Jackson has been seen at exclusive London clubs with a well known model is uniquely horrifying.

No, Godfrey, the model was not a Citadel zombie....

Apart from the obvious stuff, such as telling you what *really* went on at various conventions, this column is intended to provide some well-deserved publicity for the amateur side of the hobby. Those of you already in the know will hopefully find the Tavern a good place in which to keep up with the doings of your favourite, and not so favourite, hobby personalities, but there must be many people 'out there' who have never seen a fanzine, let alone trembled in fear in the face of a Marc Gascoigne editorial. For such people, should they dare to set eyeballs to my witterings, a whole new world is about to open up. Who knows where it might lead? Why even our glorious leader, 'Uncle Don', is rumoured to have begun his career as a mere fanzine editor.

Of course, all this fascinating content queuing up for admission to the column is not going to prevent yours truly from occasionally opening his big mouth and pontificating on some subject or other. I'd get lonely talking to myself and Godfrey all of the time so I've got to stir up a reaction somehow. If I didn't, you'd be likely to find that I've rabbited on for my alloted span of words and said absolutely nothing. As Godfrey is now frantically signalling to me that it is closing time, this would appear to be exactly what I have just done. Goodnight.

Pete Tamlyn is editor of the ***Acolyte****, fanzine. Copies of the Acolyte are available from:*
Pete Tamlyn, 6 Broughton Close, Bierton, AYLESBURY, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5DJ.

GAME

STARFRONTIERS™ game

The STARFRONTIERS™ game is one of the best presented games I've ever seen. Gone are the days of unfathomable rule books which leave you wondering how to design adventures. Whether you are a newcomer or a veteran role-player, this game gets you into the action with a minimum of effort. Included in the box are two rule books — Basic and Expanded, a module, a sheet of counters, city and terrain maps and two 10-sided dice.

The Basic Rules introduce the game's background, where humans share space with Dralisites - bloblike amoebas who enjoy philosophy and old jokes; Vrusks -business minded insects who love beauty, art and music; and Yazirians - apelike night hunters. Two fast paced and easy adventures give the feel of the game and provide hints for further ones.

The Expanded Rules deal with setting up a campaign. Character generation is dealt with by offering players a choice of 13 skills. Characters can be either military, technological or biosocial specialists. Specialisation does not restrict the skills players can learn but makes those outside of the speciality harder to attain. The experience system is beautifully simple requiring no complex maths. Points are earned for alertness and good role-playing. These are used to increase skills and requisites. In time 'super' characters will develop with very high physical attributes for whom the game holds few

JUDGE DREDD

Games that draw inspiration from the world of films, books or T.V. present a problem to the reviewer or potential player in that it is difficult to divorce the game from the subject. That's fine if you are such a fan that you will be interested in ANYTHING that bears the name of your hero, but not so good if you are more discriminating, or if you are not at all familiar with the theme before you see the game. The question one needs to ask is: 'is the game itself any good, or am I judging it because it features my favourite characters?'

The weakest games of this type might just as well feature the Mr. Men as Captain Kirk or Luke Skywalker. In the end there has to be something original about the game to make it unique; an evocative box cover and lots of advertising are not enough.

JUDGE DREDD is a boxed boardgame based on the star of the comic-strip adventure in 2000-AD. There is one very

REVIEWS

challenges. An alternative is to increase the cost of improvement, once high figures are reached, making it more difficult to enter the super-hero bracket.

There are a few serious quibbles. The lifespan of the various races stetches credulity; humans can live up to 200 years. Either this should be reduced or something akin to Larry Niven's Boosterspice should be available to prolong life. TSR's packaging department seems to be becoming divorced from gamers; the map for the module is difficult to key under artificial light and it has been reproduced on the back of the box where players can see it, an oversight that never should have occured.

It is also a pity that there are no rules for designing starships or space combat, though these are due for release later this year. Even without starship rules, the STARFRONTIERS™ game is one of the best available. It has been designed with an emphasis on playability and here it succeeds admirably. Its inspiration comes more from pulp fiction than the 'believable' SciFi on which **Traveller** is based. Whether this style of play appeals is a matter of personal taste. Players of the D&D® game will certainly enjoy it, for in many ways this game is a kind of D&D in space.

In summary, the STARFRONTIERS game is an excellent introduction to Sci Fi gaming, a game I heartily recommend to beginners and experienced gamers. A lot of expertise has gone into the designing of this product and the result is a very enjoyable and easy to learn game.

There is a good reason for putting the STARFRONTIERS game under the microscope at this time, some while after the launch of the game (apart from the fact that we haven't been here up to now!); the game is undergoing considerable expansion. Already in the shops is the second module in the game, **SF 1: VOLTURNUS PLANET OF MYSTERY** (**SF 0: CRASH ON VOLTURNUS** was included in the boxed set), and **SF 2: STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS** will appear very shortly. Together the three form a trilogy dealing with the harsh, desolate world of the titles.

The adventure opens when the players are hired to discover the fate of a previous expedition to the planet. Arriving in the Volturnus solar system, their ship is attacked, forcing them to abandon it. Crashing in the desert in one of the ship's boats, the characters find survival to be of the utmost importance. Contact with a primitive alien race brings with relief from thirst but presents new challenges. A series of rumours in SF: 1 leads to further exploration and discovery of alien artifacts. Further clues set the scene for SF: 2, which promises to be interesting.

The thought gone into these modules is impressive; both are excellent examples of introductory adventures allowing easy assimilation of the rules. SF: 0 introduces combat and allows characters to exercise some of their skills; SF: 1 builds on this by making more technology available. There are a good balance between brain and brawn. Players have to role-play to survive; reliance on a blaster is not enough! Fully fleshed out encounters and extensive background data make the referee's job very easy and brings each situation to life.

My one criticism is the difference between Melee and Ranged Weapon scores in the two modules, SF: 0 lists these as total scores while SF: 1 gives only the raw score without modifiers, a minor point, but one which can cause confusion.

If you enjoy the STARFRONTIERS game, and SF: 0, you'll want SF: 1 — it's even better! The two are a remarkable introduction to the game, showing its possibilities and providing plenty of excitement.

Jim Bambra

The STARFRONTIERS™ game, and all following components are available from TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd. The full boxed game, with rule books, module SF: 0, chits, maps and die costs £8.95. Module SF: 1 costs £2.95.

good point about the game mechanics; players take part as judges, moving around Mega-City One making arrests. Most times the judge has an in-built inferiority compared with the 'perp' (that's a criminal to you and me, you have to learn the dialogue to get anything from the game) he/she is trying to arrest, so a player can improve his chances by playing 'action cards'. Other players can then make things worse by playing certain negative cards, and so on. When all this is over, dice add a further random element to the resolution of combat.

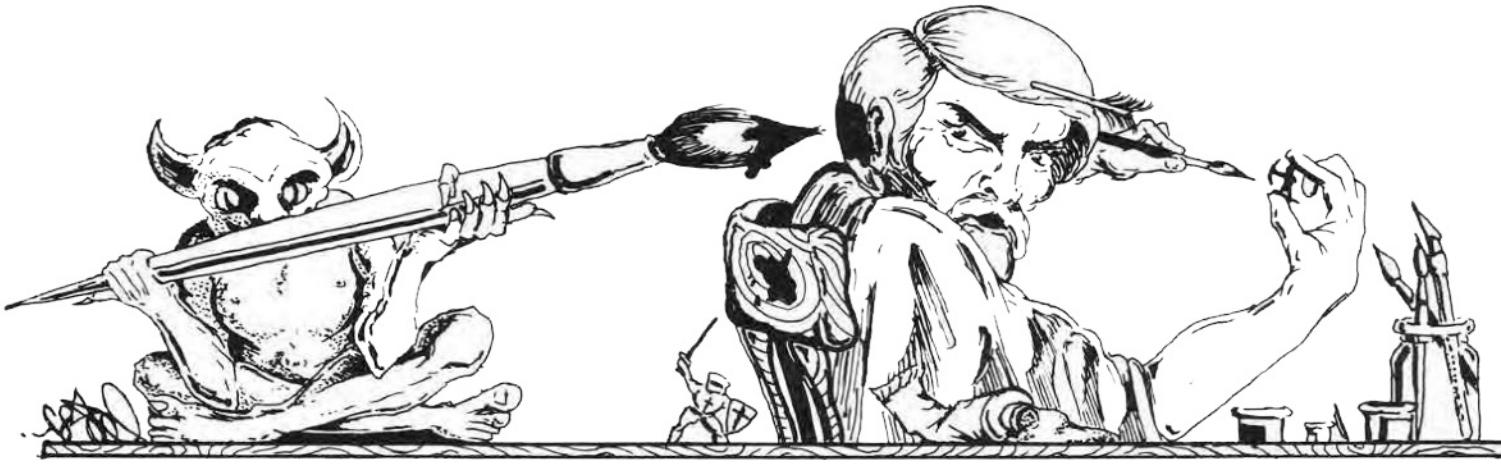
The action cards are the best part of the game, causing all manner of inter-action between players. During the first play, more time is spent reading humorous accounts of action than in actually playing and while these are definitely superfluous after the first game, they all have a kind of character of their own. My own favourite is 'Edwin Parsey', a notorious confessor to crimes commited by others. There is a sadistic joy in watching an opponent throwing all caution to the wind to make a difficult arrest, or seeing him look completely certain of success, and then playing this card on him. The arrest scores nothing; it is unbearable when it happens to you, but great to hit somebody you love with.

These cards also have a bonus from the mechanics point of view. Among reasonable players it is virtually impossible for there to be a runaway leader — everyone else can gang up on him. It is still possible for the dice to roll against you and leave you hopelessly last, but with three or more players the leader usually finds himself attracting too much attention to stay that way for long. It certainly shows you who your friends are.

However, the game's appeal in the shops depends ultimately upon a positive reaction to the character of Judge Dredd and the setting of Mega-City One. The rules, cards and board are all developments of the values and humour featured in the comic-strip. In that sense it is a fine tie-in. Fans of the comic will find the game an amusing chance to identify themselves with their hero. Other customers might find this violent city, with law administered by a synthesis of judge, jury and executioner, too depressing and possibly distasteful. Mega-City One is not a holiday resort. That alone limits the appeal of a fine game, with excellent opportunities for player inter-action and fine balance. If you like mayhem, this has to be a winner — oh, and there are plans for a role-playing variant. That really could be nasty....

Paul Cockburn

Judge Dredd, a boxed game with board, cards rule booklet and dice, £ 7.50, from Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, LONDON NW10 6JP.



Michael Brunton is arguably Britain's leading painter of 25mm fantasy figures. His figures came first and second in the competition at Games-day '82. In this short series of articles he gives advice and tips on how to paint successfully.

The most important single thing for painting fantasy figures is imagination. It's imagination, not historical accuracy, which determines the finished product, and also provides variety. However a sense of realism should exist; a couple of reference books are quite useful. You don't have to be 100% accurate but it does help to know what a suit of armour looks like, or what colours a horse can be.

EQUIPMENT

The following section is all about the materials you will require to produce good-looking figures. As a guide I have also tried to give some indication of the costs involved. You must remember, however, that quality radically affects the price of all these items, and that my opinion of what is good equipment is subjectively based. Prices will also vary from source to source. The costs mentioned in the article are based on what I was paying at the end of 1982. Inflation will inevitably take its toll.

TOOLS AND ADHESIVES

The tools needed to paint figures are simple and few in number. Most of them are used to clean up the figures before painting by removing mould lines, flash and the like.

The most important tool of all is a good craft knife. Don't use an old razorblade or a knife with snap-off blades stored in the handle. A knife with a metal handle which accepts a range of blades is recommended. Be warned: always use a knife in a safe direction — away from you. If a blade snaps or slips you could end up minus some finger ends.

A set of small files, with flat, round, half-round, triangular and square cross-sections may be useful. Some 'wet and dry' paper is very useful, instead of, or in addition to, a set of files. Incidentally emery boards make a reasonable substitute and are quite good in themselves.

The best adhesives for assembling figures or for mounting finished figures on stands is one of the cyanoacrylate type —one of the so-called 'super glues'. After some experimentation I settled on UHU Supalok as the best product. It gives a fast bond and (a major point in its favour) is well packed in a child-proof tube. These glues really are dangerous when used incorrectly and should always be treated with the greatest respect — flesh bonds just as readily as metal. Carefully follow the manufacturers' instructions.

The other useful materials for painting fantasy figures might seem an odd selection. You will need Blu-Tack, Milliput Epoxy Putty and Tetrion. Blu-Tack is a very useful product for holding figures together during assembly or for attaching them to some kind of handle during painting, so that the figure isn't touched until finished and varnished. Milliput Epoxy Putty is a two-part modelling clay which sets hard after about two hours or so. It can be used for filling holes and cracks caused by moulding defects and for modifying figures by adding extra equipment and the like. Milliput, like Tetrion, can be used to create groundwork on bases of finished figures.

BRUSHES

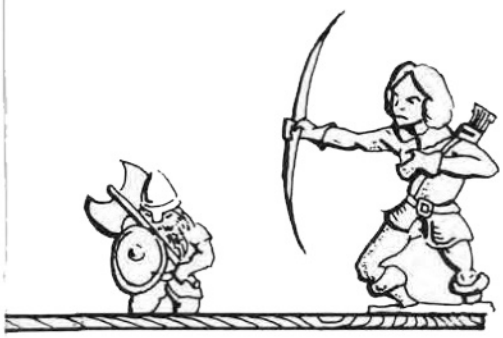
There is only one sort of brush worth using for figure painting — artists' pure sable watercolour brushes. Although as a single item they are very expensive, about £1-2 each, they will give excellent service for months; years, if properly looked after. These brushes may cost seven or eight times as much as a 'hobby' brush of the same size but the extra quality, fineness of point and degree of control over where the paint is going is vital when painting something as small as a 25mm figure.

The best place to buy a good sable brush is at a specialist art suppliers. Make sure the brush has a good point. If necessary lick the hairs and form the tip — gently —with your fingers. If the brush doesn't come to a good sharp point put it back and try another. The size of the brush is just as important. A Size 0 or 00 sable seems a better buy for work on small figures than a Size 1 or 2 but it isn't really. A Size 1 or 2 will produce as fine a point and will hold a good deal more paint, which is an important consideration. All of the figures I have painted have been done using a Size 2 sable brush or larger.

Brushes will last longer and give better service if they are treated well. Looking after brushes is more than just cleaning them properly — it also means using them properly.

1. Always wipe the brush from root to tip, so that the point is maintained. Never wipe a brush from tip to root or push brushes into paint — there is no faster way of damaging them beyond repair.
2. Never stir paint in pots with brushes (hair or handle) or mix paints in the palette with a brush. For both tasks something like a wooden cocktail stick is far better.
3. Try not to allow pigment to get up the hairs as far as the roots. Once any paint has got into the ferrule it is extremely difficult to remove, and will spread the hairs, thus ruining the brush's point. Ideally only the lower half of the hairs, from the point, should come into contact with the paint. Buying a larger brush will ensure that there is enough paint present to do the job in hand. Once paint does get into the ferrule and the point goes, put the brush aside.
4. Never leave brushes standing in thinners during a painting session. For that matter never leave brushes resting on their hairs at all, unless you like painting round corners.
5. Always clean brushes after a painting session with the correct thinners for the paint you have been using. Wipe the brush clean of thinners, and then wash it gently in a weak solution of washing-up liquid. Rinse the brush in cold water and wipe off excess water. Gently reform the point of the brush.

Figure Painting



by Mike Brunton

6. Always store brushes so that the hairs are not damaged. Ideally a brush should be stored vertically, in a jar or something similar. Always store them handles downwards, and make sure that the hairs are not leaning against the side of the jar. It's a good idea to get some neoprene tubing (used by aeromodellers as fuel piping) long enough to extend over the hairs and wide enough to go over the ferrule, as this provides excellent protection. Some brushes are sold with tubing for just this purpose — so don't throw it away as packaging.

UNDERCOAT

Undercoating figures is an important part of the job which is too often ignored. The type of undercoat and its application can have a profound, and sometimes unfortunate, effect on the finished product. An undercoat has two important functions: it seals off the metal, and provides a good surface for the paint to 'key' into. Furthermore, some interesting effects can be obtained by staining the undercoat with thin washes of colour.

For fantasy figures one of the best undercoats is a good quality matt white paint, although there is no reason why any colour cannot be used. Dark undercoat can give interesting effects when bright colours are built up on top. Humbrol matt white enamel or Hinchcliffe Models Ltd.'s Hobby Spray Undercoat both provide good coverage. I use Rose Miniatures' water soluble paints, which I have found give a good surface for oil paints. Whatever undercoat you use always apply it as several thin coats rather than as a single thick one. A single coat tends to mask detail on the figure.

PAINTS

The paint you choose will depend largely on your own personal preference and the state of your bank balance. You should invest in a good acrylic or artists oil paint colour card. There are references in this article to specific colours in acrylic and oil paint ranges. Generally these are standardized in a way which hobby paints are not. Whether you choose to stick to one type of paint or mix several different ones is of little consequence. What really matters is to arrive at a technique that suits you. When painting fantasy figures these days I use artists' oil paints with some Rose watercolours and metallics and Humbrol metallics. Always be ready to experiment to achieve different effects when you reach sufficient proficiency.

Never use a gloss paint, for this instantly reduces a model to the status of a toy. These figures are not toys in any sense of the word. The only areas where gloss paint is reasonable are metal work or polished leather. Even then, careful shading is more appropriate than high gloss.

Enamels: Enamel paints are probably the best type for any complete beginner. Not only are they very fast-drying but they are also produced in many attractive shades. Tins cost about 35p each. Enamels are widely distributed by craft and model retailers. The easiest ranges to obtain are Airfix and Humbrol, and the Humbrol Authentics range is best for our purpose, with good colours in the Ancient Uniforms and Ceremonial Uniforms ranges. Humbrol metallic colours are also the best available for our purpose, whatever other sorts of paint you use.

With these paints, keep the tins tightly closed at all times, and make sure that the lids do not become clogged up with pigment, otherwise the paint will not remain usable. If you ever do find a skin on the paint, throw it away. The tins are relatively cheap, and once they start drying out they will give a crude grainy texture to your painting.

For thinning these paints down and cleaning brushes, Humbrol produce Thinner and Brush Cleaners, but white spirit works just as well.

Watercolours: Artists' watercolours, as such, aren't a great deal of use in painting figures except as thin washes for shading purposes. There are, however, some casein based watercolours which are quite usable on 25mm figures. Pelikan Plaka paints are produced for artists and graphic designers. Rose paints are specifically designed for military miniatures by Rose Miniatures, 15 Llanover Road, Plumstead, LONDON SE18 3ST. Rose also produce gold powder in three shades (Pale Gold, Rich Gold and Antique Gold), which is applied with a special turpentine medium. The powders can be mixed with most sorts of paint. All casein based watercolours are intermixable with acrylics, and dry just as quickly.

Acrylics: These are the paints that Grenadier Models now include in two of their sets of figures. Acrylic paints are water soluble, based on a synthetic resin. They have many of the properties of oil paints, along with some of those of watercolours. Acrylic paints dry extremely rapidly, which makes them attractive for figure painting. Those manufactured by George Rowney & Co. Ltd. are the most reasonable. Rowney Flow Formula Cryla can be used directly from the tube or thinned down with water. Flow Formula Cryla dries with a slight sheen, but, like other acrylics, can be mixed with casein based watercolours, which dry completely matt.

Oil Paints: Oil paints are not generally considered suitable for work on 25mm figures. My choice of this medium is therefore a little odd, and quite frankly not one I would recommend anyone to try without experience. However, if you do try oils and stick with them (even if the first few figures seem terrible) the sheer beauty of oil paint as a medium will make you a convert.

If you decide that oil paints are for you, then the best types to buy are artists' quality paints, as these have finer ground pigments and better quality ingredients than the students' oil paints sold by some companies. Both Winsor & Newton and Rowney make very good oil paints. If the slow drying times of oils put you off (typically a few days, although figures can be worked on almost immediately), then Winsor & Newton Alkyd colours might be worth considering. Alkyd colours are based on synthetic resin, and are the

same as standard oil paints except they dry in around 45 minutes. Oil paints are completely intermixable with Humbrol enamels.

Whatever paints you do decide to use please remember that it is not always economical to buy large tubes or tins of paint. Although these seem good value only a small amount of paint is used on a figure, and a large quantity may well dry out before it is used.

Both oil and acrylic paints can vary tremendously in cost. Depending upon what materials are used as pigments, tubes of paint can differ in price by a factor of 5 or 6. Typically, a small tube of oil paint might cost 80p (for a tube of cadmium yellow) to £3-4 (for a tube of rose madder or vermillion). Some colours, like genuine ultramarine (as opposed to French ultramarine), are prohibitively expensive.

There are a number of options regarding mixing palettes. For turpentine or white spirit soluble paints a vegetable paper palette is more than adequate. They are sold in tear-off pads of about 50 or so and those made by Daler and by Rowney are equally good. For water soluble paints a plastic sheet does nicely. Cling film makes an easily disposable mixing palette when stretched across a flat surface. You can, of course, buy purpose made plastic or porcelain paint palettes —if you do, make sure they are completely clean at the end of a painting session.

VARNISH

All your hard work will be rubbed off by assorted grubby fingers unless you varnish the model properly.

Almost any good quality matt varnish will do but gloss varnish reduces any model to the stature of a toy. Hinchcliffe Models Ltd. market a matt varnish spray which I am told is quite good. At present I use Frisk matt lacquer spray, which is sold as 'Frisk Lac Matt'. It is a quick drying protective spray for artwork which is specifically manufactured to protect from finger prints, abrasion, smudging and general handling.

As with undercoat, varnish is best applied in several thin coats rather than as a single thick gunge.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Make sure that wherever you work is as dust free as possible and well ventilated. A number of glues and paint thinners give off heavy fumes which can be very dangerous if continuously inhaled. Don't smoke while you are painting either: the fumes are inflammable and some turn poisonous when they burn. Choose somewhere which is well lit, with an even spread of light across the work area: natural daylight is best. Find some kind of workboard. This is a simple piece of self-preservation. Wives/mothers do not take kindly to having furniture cut into with knives or splattered with paint.

PREPARATION & PAINTING

PREPARING THE FIGURE

Before any figure is painted it should be cleaned up and undercoated.

First job — file the bottom of the figure's base flat so that it stands up on its own. Trim off all the excess flash, moulding runners and moulding lines with a craft knife (I use a scalpel with a No. 11 blade) and a file. This doesn't take long unless the figure is badly cast or heavily flashed, but it does improve figures immeasurably. Once this is done, check the figure over for holes which occasionally occur in the surface when too much mould release agent has been used. If you find any pitting make it good with a smooth surface filler (Milliput or a similar material). In the unlikely event that a small piece of casting is missing it is possible to build a replacement with Milliput. If you use any filler then let it dry thoroughly before you proceed any further.

If the figure has become greasy in the cleaning-up process you should wash it in a weak solution of washing-up liquid first, as the undercoat will adhere better to a clean surface. At this point you should mount the model on some form of painting handle with a bit of Blue-Tack. You should also decide whether to assemble a multi-part figure now or leave it until nearer completion — i.e. paint the bits separately.

Whatever undercoat you use on the figure, and however you apply it, (brush or spray) always put it on as several thin washes, allowing each to dry before putting on the next. Two or three washes should suffice. Some manufacturers go to a great deal of trouble putting surface details on figures, so don't hide it under heavy layers of paint.

PAINTING

There are some basic rules which make painting figures a lot easier when they are followed intelligently.

Patience is a virtue which should be cultivated, as rushing the work at any stage always gives inferior results. Always start painting the areas on a figure which are the most recessed on the casting, but if possible try to work on lighter coloured areas first. While dark colours will cover light ones if you change your mind, the reverse is very rarely true. Finally, work on metallic areas last of all, and maintain a separate pot of thinners for metallic paints, as they have a tendency to contaminate ordinary colours with metal flakes.

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

There are two techniques which need explaining before I go into detail on painting methods:

Dry Brushing: Dry brushing is one of those useful ideas that can be used for many things. It involves two processes. Firstly, paint the area a darker shade than is required, and let this dry completely. Next make up a mix which is a lighter shade than required. Get some of this mix on your brush, soak off as much of the thinner as possible and *gently* splay out the brush hairs. With the paint almost dry on the brush draw it lightly across the intended area, so that only raised areas pick up a 'dusting' of colour. Repeat this process several times if necessary to achieve depth of colour — don't try to dry brush all in one go. This is an easy way of doing hair, fur and the like.

Colour Washes: Colour washes are extremely simple. Basically all that is required to do this is a colour and thinners. Thin the paint until it becomes transparent and then apply it to the figure with a large brush. The paint will run into the detail and make it stand out. Multiple washes can provide some very interesting effects.

PAINTING A FACE

The best place to start any figure is the face. In the final analysis the standard of painting on the face makes or breaks the figure and no amount of fine detail work on the rest of the figure can rescue it if the face is poorly rendered.

OK, so how should you start on the face? It might seem a good idea to use the commercial 'Flesh' mixes that are produced directly from the tin or tube — but how many people do you know with anaemic salmon pink complexions?

It is far more satisfying to mix your own flesh tints for figure work, and to produce different colours for different figures. After all, no two figures are exactly the same colour. There are literally dozens of ways to arrive at a colour that might be termed 'Flesh' and the variety of tones which can be produced easily is remarkable. Mixed with white and yellow ochre the following colours all give a range of flesh tints:

Venetian red, umber and Prussian blue;
Venetian red, umber and ultramarine;
Venetian red, umber and black;
Burnt sienna, umber and ultramarine;
Indian red, umber and ultramarine;
Umber and ultramarine;
Vermillion and burnt umber;
Rose madder, vermillion and umber.

These suggestions just scratch the surface of possible mixes. Any combination of the mixes above can be used with a wide variety of additional colours. Don't be limited to what seems reasonable. Veridian, Sepia, Cadmium yellow, Vandyke brown and many more can be added in small quantities. If it looks right, use it.

Guard against making skin tones too pale — it just doesn't look right on a small figure. After all, your average character is supposed to spend a great deal of time in harsh conditions. Remember that this list of flesh mixes only covers the standard human skin colours, the normal black/brown/yellow/off-pink varieties. When you add the skin colours which appear in fantasy novels — green, blue, purple, etc., the range is virtually limitless.

The first stage in painting a face is to make up this natural flesh colour (or unnatural, if you feel that way inclined) by using the techniques I have just outlined. Apply the colour over the entire area of the face and neck. Don't do the hands just yet. Add a touch of crimson, yellow ochre and burnt umber to some of the base colour. Shade in the eye sockets, the depression under the lower lip, under the chin and around the hair line. Adding blue or green to this shade will make the flesh look older or more tired.

Now, most important, turn to the eyes. Paint in the whites (even if the 'whites' aren't white) and then the iris and make sure no white shows under the iris in a 'Heavenward Gaze'. Take pains to avoid a wide-eyed stare. When you have done the iris add a darker line around the eyes and blend the lower lids to the bottom of the eyes. At this point you can add colour to the upper lid to produce an impression of make-up on female figures. If you have problems getting the iris centred try to make the eyes look to one side or the other — preferably the same side for both eyes! If you are particularly masochistic you can try adding a black pupil and putting a tiny highlight of white in the iris.

Right, now the eyes are done, back to the rest of the face. Add a touch of white to some of the basic flesh and highlight the ridge of the nose, the cheek bones under the eyes, the sides of the nostrils, the chin and the centre patch of the forehead. Add a little touch of red to the flesh colour and touch in the cheeks and lips, with perhaps a slightly darker tone between the lips. Now blend all these tones together — carefully — with an almost dry brush to ensure that there is a completely smooth progression between the highest and lowest shades.

Hair colour deserves a mention at this point as an integral part of the face. Hair colour is part of a person's complexion. For example, blonde or gingerhaired people are unlikely to be heavily tanned. Grey haired people also tend to have older, more weather-beaten skin. Try to avoid pure black as a hair colour. Few people actually have black hair, and the colour looks far too dramatic on a small figure.

When you decide on a hair colour, make up a mixture which is one shade darker than the final tone required, and paint the hair with this shade. Now gently dry brush the hair with white or a lighter shade, whichever looks the most appropriate. The light colour takes on the high points and produces a realistic and pleasing effect with little effort.

HANDS AND BODIES

Hands on most figures, and flesh generally on naked figures, require a different approach to faces. Before giving these areas a base coat of the desired flesh mix, apply a wash of sepia or umber to the hands, then leave the wash showing between the fingers when you apply the flesh tone. This wash has the effect of darkening the skin tone, giving a hard, weather-worn appearance. Similarly, when painting a barbarian for instance, shade the musculature with more brown than red to emphasise this weathered look and highlight with a flesh mixture that includes more white and yellow ochre. Tone this effect down on figures who are not such outdoor types by being less emphatic in your shading and using a richer, redder tone.

Mike Brunton will be back next issue, looking at: painting the rest of the figure, monsters and animation.

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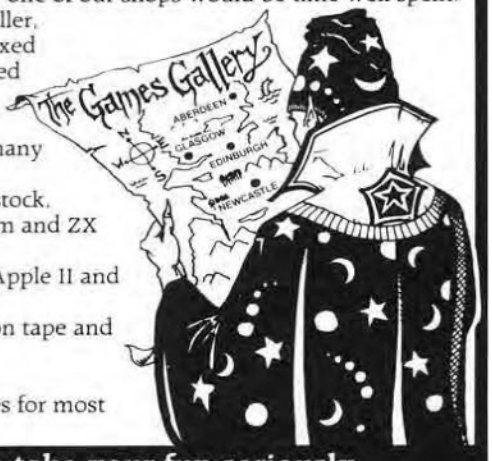

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LETTERS

The few letters below represent those sent to us in response to a mailing of the dummy issue of IMAGINE™ magazine. Correspondents should address letters to Keith or Paul at the Mill.

Dear Paul,
Thank you for the dummy issue of IMAGINE magazine. It has been well received by the D&D® society, and had quite a wide circulation. I hope the real thing attracts as much interest!

Jonathan Conner

Dear Paul,
I thought I'd add my voice to the hordes of comments on the dummy copy of the magazine. Overall, I would say it was a pretty good issue. How much does it represent what issue one will contain?

Mike Lewis

Dear Paul,
Thank you for the dummy issue of IMAGINE magazine. It didn't half impress them at the local wargames club! They never realised that they had a real live celebrity in their midst.

Dave Thorby

While the dummy issue was intended to give a clear indication of what we hoped to do with IMAGINE magazine, we feel that No.1 is a vast improvement. What did you think of IMAGINE magazine?....

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In this slot we will keep players informed of events up and down the country. Organisers of such activities should note that while inclusion in this column is free, it is entirely at the discretion of the editor.

There is now a **Northern Games Day '83** to be held at **UMIST, Manchester** on **April 9th and 10th**. The organisers hope it will be as successful as the London version. We will include a review of the event in# 3 or 4 of IMAGINE™ magazine.

Sol III, the 15th Star Trek Convention takes place **May 27th-30th**, at the **Grand Hotel, Birmingham**. Chekov and Scotty will be there, plus Bob Shaw and Anne McCaffrey. Details from the Convention, 39 Dersingham Avenue, LONDON E12.

Manorcon '83, incorporating the Universities Diplomacy Tournament, takes place at the **Manor House, Edgbaston, Birmingham**, from **Friday, July 29th to Sunday July 31st**. Fee £3, accomodation available. Contact Mike Benyon, 30 Smirrels Road, Hall Green, Birmingham.

Comic collectors note that **Northwest Comic Marts** are held in **Bluecoat Concert Hall, Liverpool** and **Piccadilly Plaza Exhibition Hall, Manchester**. The next Liverpool dates are **April 23rd, June 4th, August 27th, October 22nd, and December 10th**. In Manchester they are on **May 7th, July 2nd, September 17th and November 19th**. Contact Fantasy World, 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent with large sae for details.

The next London marts are on **March 26th and June 4th** at the **Central Hall, Westminster**. Titan Dist., PO Box 250, LONDON E3 4RT have details.

April 10th sees the **West Mids. Military & Modelling show** at the **Alumwell Centre, Walsall**. No other details on hand.

Hobbymeets: informal gatherings of postal games organisers and players which seem to be the growth industry of the hobby! In the following list town, site, date and contact are given where known:

London; The Lamb, Lamb Conduit Street WC1; meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in each month; no contact — just roll up!

FANZINES

Our requests for the latest issues of the many fanzines up and down the country met with some response. In this issue we look at nine 'zines of varying kinds. Editors of these and other fanzines should continue to send us copies of their wares for review in this section.

News first. Mike Costello (of the **War Machine**) is collaborating with John Lambshead and others — including our own Roger Musson — on **Wargame News**. We haven't seen one yet, but we received the flier. It will concentrate on board wargames. Issue 1 of this monthly 'zine was launched on 8th December. Subs (£7 for 12 Wargames News, £17 for 12 each of WN and War Machine) and additional information from Mike at: Emjay, 17 Langbank Avenue, Rise Park, Nottingham NG5 5BU. Incidentally, we hope Mike will be contributing a regular feature on computer gaming before long.

Issue 4 of the excellent **20 Years On** continues the run of this invaluable information 'zine. Available from Simon Billeness, 20 Winifred Road, Coulsdon, SURREY CR3 3JA, it costs 35p and is a guide to most activities and openings in the world of postal gaming. It is very highly recommended.

Astradyne 57 is a typical, though better than average, example of a postal game 'zine. Well produced, it keeps *Cricket* and *Soccerleague* players abreast of their games. This is the sort of postal fanzine that attracts more players. Available from Ian Lee, 49 Fleet Ave., Upminster, ESSEX. I hope to get a game of *Cricket* before long, so we will come back to this 'zine.

Cerebo 16, 65p, from G.F.Willmets, 74 Gloucester Rd., Bridgwater, Somerset, is devoted to fans of the X-Men. Not a gamer's 'zine, but good value.

Pete Tamlyn's **Acolyte 43** tries to do a little more with the content, though it does not look as good as Astradyne. In this issue: part 14 of playing RPGs, games reviews, book reviews, 'zine reviews, letters and others. En Garde!, Diplomacy and some variants are played through this fanzine, available from Pete Tamlyn, 6 Broughton Close, Bierton, Aylesbury, BUCKS. HP22 5DJ. Pete is well respected in the hobby, and he writes for IMAGINE™ magazine. What more can I say?

For £5 one can join the British Fantasy Society. As a member I got the **British Fantasy Newsletter**, Vol.10 no. 2/3 free, otherwise it's 75p. 52 pages of reviews and news on books, TV and films. It is very good value. This issue arrived with a small BFS booklet with fiction by Ramsay Campbell called *Through The Walls*, (50p). Both from Pete Coleborn, 72 Imperial Rd., Huddersfield, HD1 4PG.

Illusionary Script
the answers

Boris was talking about the letter 'A'.

The answer to the Ogres' riddle was 2.

Lucas died by suicide, in the problem set by the Guild of Assassins.

The riddle of the villagers and their professions should have this answer: Smith is the baker, and his apprentice is Young Beerpot; Baker is the magic-user, and his aid is Young Smith; Beerpot is the smith, and his helper is Young Spell; and Spell is the innkeeper, aided by Young Baker.

Lastly, the Worms of the Earth at T'mill can be traversed 259.2 leagues.

Staines; The Swan, nr. Staines Bridge; 4th Monday; contact Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, SURREY.

Godalming; location unknown; meets 2nd Tuesday each month; details, again, from Richard Walkerdine.

Cambridge; Salisbury Arms, nr. station; 2nd Friday every month; contact Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, HERTS.

Newcastle; The Pig and Whistle, Cloth Market; 1st Wednesday every month; contact Richard Gooch, 45 St. Keverne Square, Kenton Bar, Newcastle.

More next month. Thanks to Simon Billeness and 20 Years On for the information.

Dragonlords 14 — where would we be without it? Marred only by the heavy exit of Marc Gascoigne, this issue reviewed Games Day '82; introduced variant rules for the AD&D game; carried a Fergus O'Connor Runequest adventure, news, reviews and so on. It looks good, has fine artwork in places and always does well in convention polls. From Ian Marsh, Avalon, Grams Road, Walmer, KENT CT14 7PU. Ian and Mike Lewis have offered to sell written material to IMAGINE magazine as well. I just thought I'd mention that.

Greatest Hits 104 arrived from Pete Birks, 39 Handforth Road, LONDON SW9 0LL. It costs £2 for 5 issues and runs Diplomacy games. Production is poor, but the content is good and varied; this issue contained TV reviews, book reviews, fanzine run-downs and letters.

CLUB NEWS

This space is devoted to the scores of clubs up and down the country running role-playing games, IMAGINE™ magazine will publish the activities of your club in this regular feature free of charge and without prejudice for any particular game system. Just write to Paul Cockburn, IMAGINE Magazine, TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd., The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD.

First off the mark we have a club in the **Bristol area**. Contact: John Nash, 84 Henleaze Road, Henleaze, BRISTOL BS9 4JY. This club plays mainly Fantasy/SF games and meets at players' houses on a weekly basis. 'We have about five regular players and anyone else is welcome. We have a hall available for anything large.'

The Lords of Cahli meet in **Newquay**. Contact: Kevin Robinson — the High Lord of Cahli — St. Mary's, West Pentire Road, Crantock, Newquay, CORNWALL. 'The club consists of five players ranging from 15-17 years old, except Big Kev, who is over 30!' They play D&D®, Traveller and GAMMA WORLD™ games, every Sunday at players' houses.

Elmwood Wargames Club meet every Tuesday, 6-10pm, at the Elmwood Community Centre in the **Stockton-on-Tees** area. Contact: Andrew Pointon, 17 Seamer Grove, Hartburn, Stockton-on-Tees, CLEVELAND. They have an average attendance of 25 players, 11 to adult, playing AD&D™, Traveller, Runequest, TOP SECRET® and Arduin Grimoire games. Membership 20p a week.

In the **Horsham area** a group, mostly of A level students or undergraduates, would welcome players 18+ interested in D&D, Tunnels & Trolls, Runequest, Chivalry & Sorcery, DRAGONQUEST™ and Traveller games. They meet each week at players' houses, more often during the holidays. Contact: Andy Norman, 1 Reapers Close, Wimblehurst Park, Horsham, WEST SUSSEX RH12 4TG.

In **Wiltshire** there are AD&D games on Fridays, 5-9.30, and Sundays, 1-5pm. Contact: Darren Hallett, 12 Lancaster Road, Wroughton, Thamesdown, WILTS. SN5 9HH. 'We have five players, all fourteen. We use shop-bought scenarios.'

In the **Hertfordshire area** too, there are AD&D games regularly in a school youth wing. Contact: Andrew Mulley, 30 Monks Walk, Buntingford, HERTFORDSHIRE.

The South Hants Association of Down & Out Weregamers — S.H.A.D.O.W. — meets 2-10pm every Saturday at Portsmouth Community Centre, Buckland, **Portsmouth**. They have 20 members playing AD&D, Runequest and GAMMA WORLD games, plus board wargames, Kingmaker, Quirks etc. Contact: Mark Byng, 17 Church Road, Landport, Portsmouth, HANTS. PO1 1QA.

Harold Wood Wargamers play D&D, Runequest, GAMMA WORLD, GANGBUSTERS, and En Garde games and has a strong ancient wargaming club. They meet at the Scout Hut in Queen's Park Road, **Harold Wood**, Sundays 2-7pm.

In the **Newcastle area** you could find an AD&D game through Stuart Ketchin, 20 Woodburn Avenue, Fenham, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, 4. They meet once a month, at weekends, at players' houses.

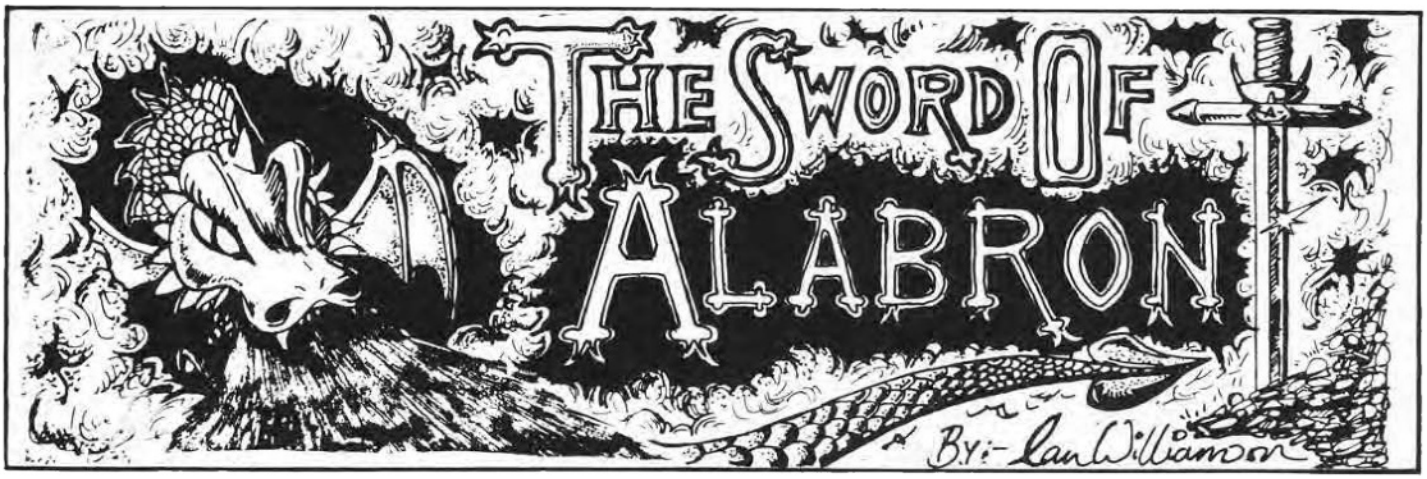
Worthing Games Club meets on the first and third Sundays of the month, 2pm at the Trades Council Building, Broadwater Road, **Worthing**, to play AD&D and TOP SECRET games. Contact Matt Haydon, 56 Bulkington Avenue, Worthing, SUSSEX.

Exeter University Gaming Club meet on Sundays (term time only), 2-11pm, in Cornwall House, **Exeter University**. Contact: Richard Case, 8 Hall Park Hill, Berkhamsted, HERTS. HP4 2NH.

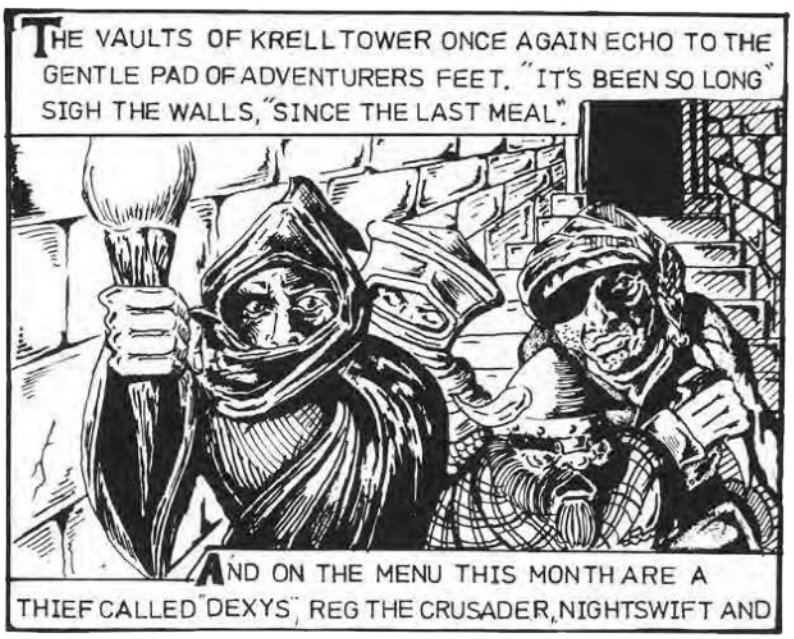
Contact: Ian Lee, 49 Fleet Avenue, Upminster, ESSEX. They have 30 members, aged 11-35.

In **High Wycombe** there is a club meeting in the British Legion Hall on Wednesdays, 7-10.30pm. They play the AD&D game and others. Contact: Stephen Easton, 6 Sedgemoor Road, Flackwell Heath, BUCKS. HP10 9AU.

The last club for this month is in the **Gosport area**. The Gosport Wargaming Club meets Friday evenings, Saturdays and other times to play D&D and Traveller games. Contact: David Burgess, 3, Beech Grove, Alverstoke, Gosport, HANTS. PO12 2EJ.


THE SWORD OF ALABRON
By:- Ian Williamson

PART ONE
ENTER...
THE DUNGEON


THE VAULTS OF KRELL TOWER ONCE AGAIN ECHO TO THE GENTLE PAD OF ADVENTURERS FEET. "IT'S BEEN SO LONG" SIGH THE WALLS, "SINCE THE LAST MEAL".
AND ON THE MENU THIS MONTH ARE A THIEF CALLED "DEXYS", REG THE CRUSADER, NIGHTSWIFT AND

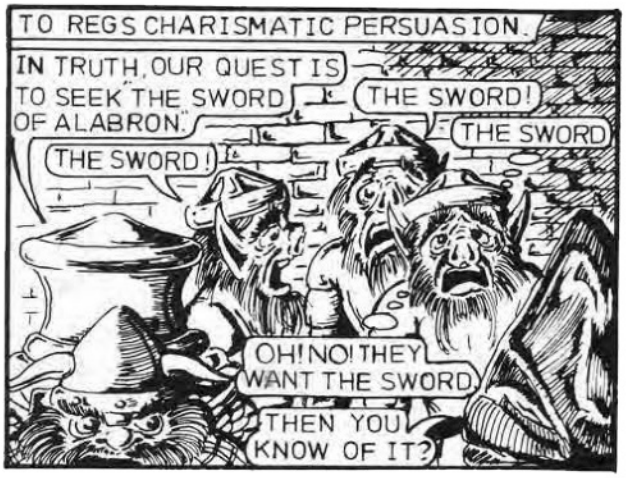
A SCOTTISH DWARF CALLED...
AUCHTER?

AI NIGHTSWIFT I HEAR IT TOO
THERE'S NAY DOOT IT'S THE DOOR AHEED

HA HA HA HA HA
STRANGE CHUCKLES COME FROM THE DOOR.....
"DEXYS" MOVES SILENTLY. (25%)
D.M. ROLLS 17% A SUCCESS

AND AFTER A BRIEF EXAMINATION.
IT'S UNLOCKED, SHOULD WE HAVE A PEEP?
PERHAPS WE OUGHT TO JUST KNOCK POLITELY.
BUT AUCHTER HAS A BETTER IDEA..
SLAM
HEY YOU, OPEN THIS DOOR FOOR I BOOT IT DOON!
WHAT'S HIS INTELLIGENCE BY KRELL!
TIS SENSE HE REQUIRES
THE CALL IS ANSWERED...
HA! HE LOOKS LIKE A DWARF.
HEY COME BACK YA.. ..WHAT?
AND THE HALFLING SAID "WHAT'S A CHIMERA?" HA, HA, HA...
GORBLINS!!
CHEERS!
HELLO THERE DWARFY, FANCY A DRINK?
..OR A SWORDBLADE?
ARM NO YA DWARFY GORBLIN! BUT I WILL HAVE A WHISKY
SWAK
AUCHTER! THAT'S SENSELESS VIOLENCE
SHUT YER GORB PALADIN

THAT WAS UNCALLED FOR AUCHTER.. NOW LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS CHAPS, WE COME IN PEACE.... SORRY ABOUT THE DWARF
WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ORN?
THE GOBLINS REACT...


TO REGS CHARISMATIC PERSUASION.
IN TRUTH, OUR QUEST IS TO SEEK THE SWORD OF ALABRON.
THE SWORD!
THE SWORD
THE SWORD!
OH! NO! THEY WANT THE SWORD.
THEN YOU KNOW OF IT?

NO... NEVER HEARD OF IT!

IS IT AN ARTIFACT?
UM... NOT SURE.
HAVE YOU LOOKED IN THE D.M.S GUIDE
YES IT'S NOT IN THERE
WELL SORRY I CANT HELP.
WELL THANKS ANYWAY.

NOT AT ALL!
OW!! CHEAT!
CLANG!

COMBAT ERUPTS, MUCH TO AUCHTERS JOY, HOWEVER DEXYS OPTS FOR STAYING ALIVE
I JUST LOST 2 HIT POINTS YOU FIEND
I'LL TAKE THE URUK AND YOU TAKE THE GORBLIN,
AND I'LL BE IN SCOTLAND AFORE YE
I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE THEY'RE ALL CRAZY.. IF I CAN JU...WHAT?

....EXCUSE ME I WAS JUST ABOUT TO (ahum) ...HIDE IN THE SHADOWS (gulp) ... MATE?
UUH? HULLO..... FOOD!!!
..... NICE
...TO BE CONTINUED ?!

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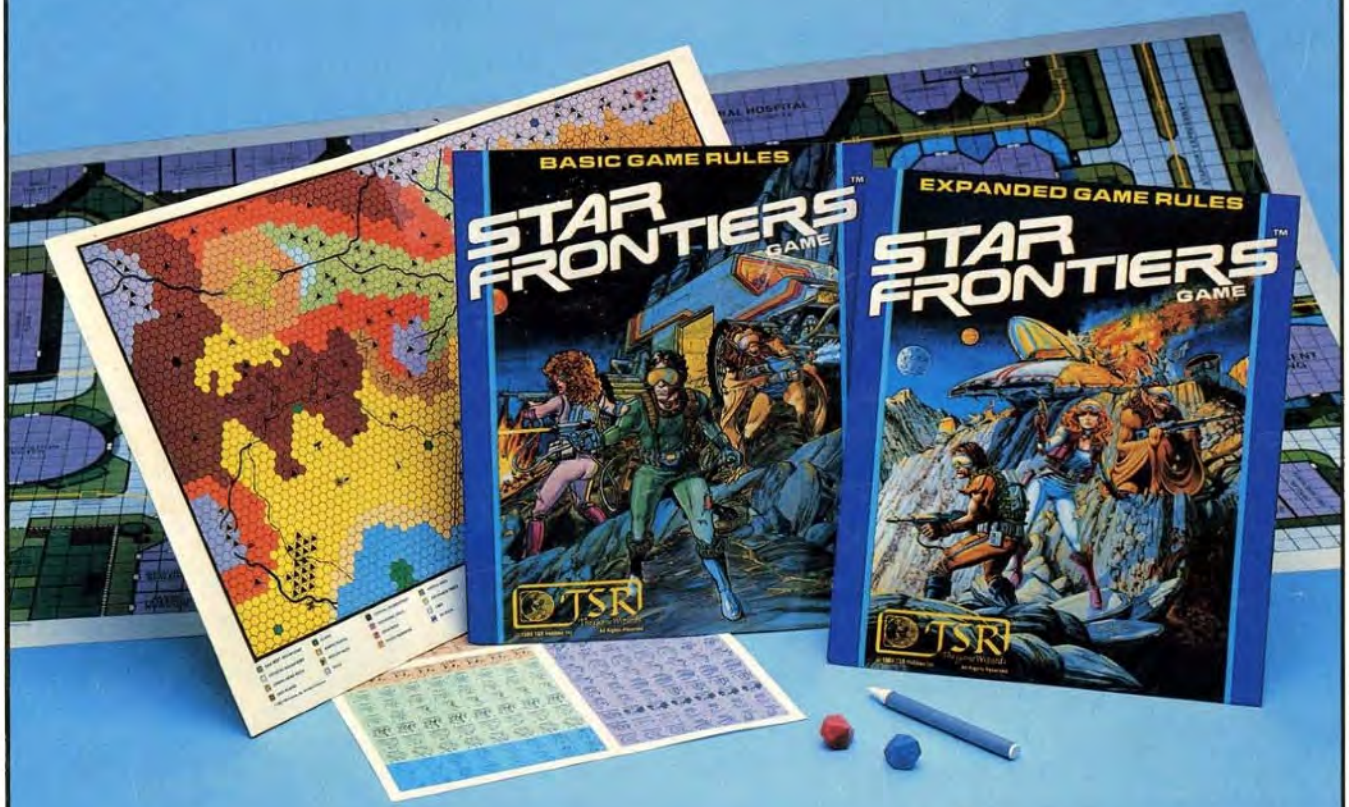

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